THE DESIGN OF Christianity.

Clem. Alexandr. Pædag.

——πρεσβυτικὸς, ὑ μαθητικὸς ὢν ὁ Παιδαγωγὸς ἢ ὑ τὸ τέλος αὐτῦ βελτῶσαι τὴν ψυχήν ἐστιν, ὑ διδάξαι σώφρονός τε, ὑκ ἐπιστημονικῦ καθηγήσασθαι βίυ.

THE DESIGN OF Christianity; OR,

A plain Demonstration and Improvement of this Proposition,

VIZ.

That the enduing men with Inward Real Righteousness or True Holiness, was the *Ultimate End* of our Saviour's Coming into the World, and is the *Great Intendment* of His Blessed Gospel.

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MVSEVM BRITAN NICVM

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To the Reader.

Reader,

WHereas *there was, ſomewhat above a Twelve-moneth ſince, expoſed to Publick view,* a Free Diſcourſe *between the two intimate Friends* Theophilus *and* Philalethes; *which containeth an Account of ſome* Principles *and* Practices *of certain Moderate Divines,* &c. *together with a Defence of them, I deſire thee to take notice that in this Tractate is purſued the main and Fundamental Reaſon of that Dialogue: As, if thou art not a ſtranger to it, thou mayeſt eaſily gueſs by the foregoing Title-page. And if thou ſhalt pleaſe to give thy ſelf the trouble of running over the following Pages, I hope thou wilt be ſatisfied that the Doctrines that are chiefly maintained in that Book, do moſt naturally reſult from, and thoſe which are moſt oppoſed in it are confuted by the Argument that is here inſiſted on.*

If thou conceiveſt that in Demonſtrating

the eſtabliſhment of Real Righteouſneſs and True Holineſs in the world to be the Ultimate Deſign of our Saviour's Coming, and the Grand *and even whole* Buſineſs of the Chriſtian Inſtitution, *I have taken upon me to prove a Propoſition that is as evidently and imdiſputably true as any* Firſt Principle; *I muſt tell thee that I moſt heartily wiſh there were more of thy mind than I doubt there are: And that I have been ſo far from giving my* Reader *any the leaſt Temptation to ſuſpect the Contrary, that I have expreſly (as thou wilt ſee) ſhewn, That there is nothing in the whole world more clearly apparent than the Truth thereof, to ſuch as are not, either through Ignorance or Wilfulneſs, very ſtrangely blinded; or that have, with any ſerioufneſs, read the New Teſtament or but a ſmall part of it.*

But though this be ſo, I may not be accuſed of ſo idley employing my ſelf in the firſt Section, as if I there held up a Torch to ſhew the Sun; for I have pointed to it by its own light

light *only*; *that is, expoſed to thy View in a few leaves the ſumm and ſubſtance of that abundant evidence which throughout the Goſpel is given us of that great* Truth. *And whoſoever ſhall ſay that to do this was needleſs, I ſhall give him my unfeigned thanks, would he make me ſenſible that I am guilty of a miſtake in believing otherwiſe: And, upon that account, rejoyce to be convinced, that I have in that buſineſs ſpent time impertinently.*

But, alas, it is no leſs undeniable, that a Diſcourſe of this nature is neceſſary *and* ſeaſonable, *than that the matter thereof is* true: *For it cannot be at all doubted, that the* Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion *is by abundance of its Profeſſors very ſadly miſtaken; and that (though it is with infinite plainneſs expreſſed to be no other than the Reformation of our Lives, and Purification of our Natures, and is wholly adapted to that purpoſe) the complaint that* Tully *took up of certain Philoſophers,* viz. *that they eſteemed their Philoſophy* Oſtentatio-

nem ſcientiæ, non Legem vitæ, a boaſt of ſcience, not a law of life, *may be applied to not a few of thoſe that are called Chriſtians, concerning their opinion of Chriſtianity.*

And beſides that there are diverſe Opinions *that too many among us are greatly fond of, which make it abſolutely certain that they think otherwiſe than they ought, and have entertained unworthy notions of the Deſign of the Goſpel, it muſt be acknowledged that ſuch* Practices *are likewiſe obſervable in the far greater part, as are a Demonſtration that if they have no falſe conception of it, yet it is but* little conſidered, *and therefore not* thorowly believed *by them. And this alone is abundantly ſufficient to avouch the* Uſefulneſs *of my undertaking both in that and the two other Sections.*

And till thoſe that Profeſs themſelves Chriſt's Diſciples do more generally become effectually ſenſible (as thoſe of the firſt Ages were) That the Myſtery *into which they are initiated is purely a* Myſtery of Godlineſs,

neſs, *and that it is entirely compoſed of ſuch Principles as tend throughly to inſtruct Man-kind in the* Particulars of that Duty *that the Law of their Nature obligeth them to, towards their Creatour, themſelves and their Fellow-creatures; together with the* moſt Powerful Motives *to* Excite, *and the* beſt means *and* moſt ſucceſsful aſſiſtances *to* enable *them to a faithful diſcharge of them; we may never hope to out-live or to ſee the leaſt abatement of that groſs Superſtition, Fanaticiſm and Enthuſiaſm, or thoſe mad Enormities and moſt impious Practices which have now for a very long time ſullied and moſt miſerably defaced the* beauty, *obſcured, nay and even utterly extinguiſh'd the* glory *of the Church of Chriſt; have laid the honor, wch ſhe was deſervedly once crowned with, in the very duſt; and bring the horrideſt ſcandal upon her holy profeſſion and that Bleſſed Name ſhe is called by.*

But not to detain thee with a tedious Preface; thou wilt have no reaſon to accuſe me, upon the account of this Diſcourſe, of

ſtarting

ſtarting and troubling the world with any more Controverſies; but mayſt on the contrary be greatly aſſured, That there cannot be taken a more effectual courſe to put an end to thoſe we are at this day diſturb'd with, and to the pernicious effects of all whatſoever, than is the right explaining and well improving of the Subject that is here handled: For this is to ſtrike at the Grand cauſe of them, they being to be imputed to nothing ſo much as to the Ignorance of, or Non-attendence to, the Deſign of Chriſtianity.

I will add no more, but that if thou ſhalt pleaſe to accept this ſmall performance as ingenuouſly *and* candidly *as it is meant* honeſtly; *and believe that it proceeds not from an Humour of Scribling, but a ſincere deſire of doing ſome ſervice, thou wilt be but juſt to him, who is ambitious of nothing ſo much as of being Inſtrumental towards the promoting of that moſt Excellent and infinitely Important Deſign in thy Heart and Life.*

E. F.

The

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The

The Introduction.

THE Accuſation that *Celſus* and *Julian*, the Grand Adverſaries of the Chriſtian Religion, had the impudent confidence to faſten upon it; namely, That it indulgeth men in, and encourageth them to the practice of immorality and wickedneſs, is ſo notoriouſly falſe and groundleſs; that there is nothing truer, or more perſpicuouſly held forth in the Books that contain Chriſtianity, than that the perfectly contrary is the *Great Deſign* of it. But yet notwithſtanding, thoſe that ſhall heedfully obſerve the lives and actions of an Infinite number of ſuch as call Chriſt their Maſter, would be very ſhrewdly tempted undoubtedly to conclude, that they ſecretly think, what thoſe Heathens had the face to publiſh.

And as for (I fear I may ſay) even moſt of thoſe Profeſſours of Faith in Chriſt, which have eſcaped the *ſcandalous* and more *groſs* pollutions of the world; that man that ſhall take an exact ſurvey of their converſations alſo, and conſider what matters they moſt buſie themſelves about, what

the designs are which they chiefly prosecute, and that not onely as *Men*, but as *Christians* too; what things they are that exercise most of their *Zeal*, and for and against which is spent the greatest part of their *Religious Heat*; will be strongly enclined to suspect, that, though they have not entertained so highly dishonourable an opinion of their Saviour, as to esteem him a Patron of Vice and Wickedness, yet they think so undervaluingly of Him, as to judge him so mean a Friend to Holiness, as that the promoting it in mens hearts and lives, if it was at all a Design of His coming into the world, and of the Religion He left behind Him, yet it was at best but a *Bye-one*, and that some other matters were much more in his Eye, and principally intended by Him.

Though I will not say that the greater part of our most forward Professors have their Heads Leavened with such thoughts, yet any one may dare to affirm that they behave themselves exactly as if they had: And moreover I am absolutely certain, that it is utterly impossible, men should make such a Bustle and Stir about matters of none, or but small importance, to the serving or prejudicing the real Interest of their Souls; and, on the other hand, be as Luke-

Lukewarm, unconcern'd and Careleſs in diverſe things that have the moſt *immediate* and *direct* tendency to their Eternal Wellfare; if they *duly* conſidered and had a *quick* ſenſe of what was now intimated, *viz. That the Buſineſs that brought the Bleſſed Jeſus by the appointment of God the Father down from Heaven; and the End of His making us the Objects of ſuch Rich and Tranſcendent Kindneſs, was the deſtroying of Sin in us, the Renewing of our depraved Natures, the Ennobling our Souls with Virtuous Qualities and Divine Diſpoſitions and Tempers, and* (in one word) *the making us partakers of His Holineſs.* And ſo long as there are but few that either believe or Conſider, that this is *The End of Chriſtianity*, and that alone which it *directly* drives at, it cannot be matter of Wonder, if multitudes of thoſe which lay a great claim to it, ſhould be (as Excellent a Religion as it is) little the *better*, nay, and in ſome reſpects even the *worſe* for it.

And on the Contrary, it is not to be in the leaſt doubted, That nothing can be ſo available to the introducing of a better ſtate of things, the abating and perfectly quenching our intemperate Heats, the regulating and bringing into due order our wild exorbitances, the governing and re-

ſtraining our extravagant and Heady Zeal, the induing us with becoming tempers, ſober thoughts, and good ſpirits, as would the thorow-belief, the due minding and digeſting of this one Principle.

And for this Reaſon, I am not able to imagine how time may be ſpent to better purpoſe, than in endeavouring to poſſeſs mens minds with it: And to Contribute thereunto, what it can, is the Buſineſs of this Treatiſe: Whereof theſe following, are the General Heads: which ſhall be inſiſted on with all poſſible perſpicuity, and convenient brevity, *viz.*

1. Firſt, *A plain Demonſtration, that, True Holineſs is the Special Deſign of Chriſtianity.*

2. Secondly, *An Account, how it comes to paſs that our Saviour hath laid ſuch Streſs upon this, as to prefer it before all other.*

3. Thirdly, *An Improvement of the whole Diſcourſe, in diverſe, (and moſt of them* Practical *) Inferences.*

SECT.

SECT. I.

That True Holineſs is the Deſign of Chriſtianity, plainly Demonſtrated.

CHAP. I.

The Nature of True Holineſs Deſcribed.

IN order to this Demonſtration it is neceſſary to be premiſed, That the *Holineſs* which is the Deſign of the Religion of Chriſt Jeſus, and is by various Forms of Speech expreſs'd in the Goſpel (as by *Godlineſs*, *Righteouſneſs*, *Converſion* and *Turning from Sin*, *Partaking of a Divine Nature*, with many other) is *ſuch* as is ſo in the moſt *proper* and *higheſt* ſenſe: Not ſuch as is Subjected in any thing *without* us, or is made ours by a meer *External application*, or is onely *Partial*; But is Originally ſeated in the *Soul and Spirit*, is a Complication and Combination of all Vertues, and hath an influence upon the whole man (as

ſhall hereafter be made to appear) and may be deſcribed after this manner.

It is ſo ſound and healthful a Complexion of Soul, as maintains in life and vigour whatſoever is Eſſential to it, and ſuffers not any thing unnatural to mix with that which is ſo; by the force and power whereof a man is enabled to behave himſelf as becometh a Creature indued with a principle of Reaſon; keeps his Supreme Faculty in its Throne, brings into due Subjection all his Inferiour ones, his ſenſual Imagination, his Brutiſh Paſſions and Affections.

It is the Purity of the Humane Nature, engaging thoſe in whom it reſides, to demean themſelves ſutably to that ſtate in which God hath placed them, and not to act disbecomingly in any Condition, Circumſtance, or Relation.

It is a Divine or God-like Nature, cauſing an hearty approbation of, and an affectionate compliance with the Eternal Laws of Righteouſneſs; and a behaviour agreeable to the Eſſential and Immutable differences of Good and Evil.

But to be ſomewhat more expreſs and diſtinct, though very brief.

This *Holineſs* is ſo excellent a Principle, or Habit of Soul, as cauſeth thoſe that are poſſeſſed of it (I mean ſo far forth as it

it is vigorous and predominant in them,)

First, To perform all Good and Virtuous Actions, whensoever there is occasion and Opportunity; and ever Carefully to abstain from those that are of a Contrary Nature.

Secondly, To do the one, and avoid the other, from truly *generous* Motives and Principles.

Now, in order to the right understanding of this, it is to be observ'd, That *Actions* may become *Duties* or *Sins* these two ways.

First, As they are Complyances with, or Transgressions of Divine *Positive* Precepts. These are the Declarations of the *Arbitrary* Will of God, whereby He restrains our liberty for great and wise reasons, in things that are of an indifferent nature, and absolutely considered are neither Good, nor Evil: And so makes things not good in themselves (and capable of becoming so, onely by reason of certain Circumstances) *Duties*; and things not evil in themselves, *Sins*. Such were all the Injunctions and Prohibitions of the *Ceremonial* Law; and some few such we have under the Gospel.

Secondly, Actions are made *Duties* or *Sins*, as they are agreeable or opposite to

the Divine *Moral* Laws: That is, Those which are of an Indispensable and Eternal obligation, which were first written in mens hearts, and Originally Dictates of Humane Nature, or necessary Conclusions and Deductions from them.

By the way, I take it for granted (and I cannot imagine how any *Considerative*, supposing he be not a very *Debauch'd*, person can in the least doubt it,) That there are *First Principles* in *Morals*, as well as in the *Mathematicks*, *Metaphysicks*, *&c.* I mean such as are self-evident, and therefore not capable of being properly demonstrated; as being no less knowable and easily assented to, than any Proposition that may be brought for the proof of them.

Now the *Holiness* we are describing is such, as engageth to the performance of the *Former sort of Duties*, and forbearance of the *Former sort of Sins*, for this Reason *primarily*, because it pleaseth Almighty God to command the one, and forbid the other: Which Reason is founded upon this certain Principle; *That it is most highly becoming all Reasonable Creatures to obey God in every thing*; and, *as much disbecoming them, in any thing to disobey him.* And secondarily, upon the account of the Reasons (if they

they are known) for which God made those Laws. And the Reasons of the *Positive* Laws contained in the Gospel are declared, of which I know not above three that are *purely* So, *viz.* That of going to God by Christ, and the Institutions of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper.*

Again, This *Holiness* is such as engageth to the performance of the *Duties*, and forbearance of the *Sins* of the *second kind*; not meerly because it is the Divine pleasure to publish Commands of *those*, and Prohibitions of *these*; but also, and especially, for the *Reasons*, which moved God to make those Publications: namely because *those* are Good in *themselves*, and infinitely becoming Creatures indued with Understanding and Liberty of Will; and *these* are no less evil in *their own Nature*, and unworthy of them.

That man that would forbear, gratefully to acknowledge his Obligations to God, or to do to his Neighbor as he would that he should do to him, &c. on the one hand; and would not stick at dishonouring his Maker, or abusing his Fellow Creatures in any kind, &c. on the other; if there were no *written Law* of God for the former, and against the latter; doth not *those Duties*, nor forbears *these Sins*, by virtue of an Holy

Holy nature that informs and acts him; but is induced thereunto by a meer *Animal* principle, and becauſe it is his *intereſt* ſo to do. And the Reaſon is clear, becauſe no one that doth thus, onely in regard of the *Written Precepts* and Prohibitions of the Divine Majeſty, doth ſo out of reſpect to them, as *ſuch*, but as they have *promiſes*, but eſpecially *threatnings* annexed to them: For to be ſure, he that performs the one, and forbears the other from any Lovely notion he hath of *Obedience*, and any hateful one he hath conceived of *diſobedience*, will alſo make Conſcience of *thoſe* and the like Duties, in regard of the goodneſs, becomingneſs, and Excellency he diſcerns in *them*; and will abſtain from *theſe* and the like Sins, becauſe of the intrinſick Evil, Turpitude, and Deformity he apprehends in *them*: For *thoſe* are no whit leſs manifeſtly lovely, and Worthy of Mankind, than is *Obedience* to the Divine Will, conſidered in an abſtracted notion; nor *theſe* leſs apparently vile, and abominable than is *Diſobedience*. For, that very Reaſon, that makes it an intolerable thing to diſobey a Law of God, (*viz.* becauſe it is highly *Unjuſt* ſo to do) makes it ſo alſo to Commit the forementioned, and ſuch like Sins; and ſo on the Contrary. Now this

Pro-

Propoſition; *That it is a baſe thing to do unjuſtly*, is one of thoſe which I call *firſt principles*; than which there is nothing Man-kind doth more naturally aſſent to: And thoſe Sins with many other are alike plain inſtances and expreſſions of that ſhameful vice *Injuſtice*, though not of an equal *degree* of it.

The ſumme of what we have ſaid in this account of the Nature of *True Holineſs* is this, *viz. That it is ſuch a Diſpoſition and Temper of the inward man, as powerfully enclines it carefully to regard and attend to, affectionately to embrace and adhere to, to be actuated by, and under the Government of all thoſe Good Practical Principles that are made known either by* Revelation, Nature, *or the uſe of* Reaſon.

Now though Nothing is more natural to the Souls of Men conſidered in their pure Eſſentials, and as they came out of their Creatour's hands, than this moſt Excellent Temper; yet by their Apoſtacy from God, and ſinking into Brutiſh ſenſuality, did they ſadly diſpoſſeſs themſelves of it, and ſo became like the Beaſts which periſh. But it pleaſed the Infinite Goodneſs of the Divine Majeſty not to give us over ſo; For when we had deſtroyed our ſelves, in him was our Help found.

He

He greatly concerned himself for the Recovery of Fallen Mankind by various means and Methods, and when the world was at the very worst, did he make use of the most Sovereign and effectual Remedy. *He, who at Sundry times, and in diverse manners spake in time past unto the Fathers by the Prophets, did in these last days send his dearly Beloved, and onely Begotten Son to us.* And to prove that the Great Errand he came upon was the effecting of our Deliverance out of that sinful State we had brought our selves into, and the putting us again into possession of that Holiness which we had Lost, is now our Next Business.

CHAP. II.

A General Demonstration that the Holiness *Described is the Design of Christianity, by a* Climax *of Seven particulars.*

IN the first place, in order to the proof of this, it is worthy our observation, that S. *John* the *Baptist* being sent to prepare the way before our Saviour, did so, by teaching the Doctrine of *Repentance*, and Baptizing men thereunto: And that we no

no sooner read of his appearing in Publique, and entring upon his Office of *Harbinger* or *Fore-runner*, but we find him Preaching this Doctrine, and making use of the News of the *Messiah*'s Approach, as a Motive to perswade them to that Duty. *Matth.* 3. 1, 2. *In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the Wilderness of Judea, and saying; Repent ye, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.* And this was that which the Angel foretold *Zacharias* he should do, when he gave him the first notice that he should be the Father of such a Son. *Luk.* 1. 16, 17. *And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God; and he shall go before him in the power, and Spirit of* Elias, *to turn the Hearts of the Fathers to the Children, and the disobedient to the Wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord:* That is, He shall make way for the *Messiah* with the same zeal against all wickedness, as was expressed by *Elias*, and likewise with an immediate Commission from Heaven, as he had, in order to the working of a General Reformation among the Jews. This sheweth that Christ's Great errand into the world was mens thorow-conversion from Sin, and the making them truly Holy; seeing that the only preparation necessary for the entertain-

tainment of him consisted in having this work begun in them.

Secondly, Upon the first news of Christ's near Approach brought by *Malachi* the last of the Prophets, this is expressed by him as that which should be his Grand Business when he was come, *Mal.* 3. 1, 2, 3. — *The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the Messenger of the Covenant whom ye delight in* (or, *have a longing expectation of:*) *Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts: But who may abide the day of his coming? Or who shall stand when he appeareth? For he is like a Refiner's fire, and like Fuller's Soap: And he shall sit as a Refiner, and purifier of Silver; and he shall purifie the Sons of Levi, and purge them as Gold is purged,* &c.

Thirdly, Immediately after his conception in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, this was foretold to *Joseph* Concerning him by an Angel, *Matth.* 1. 21. *She shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his Name* Jesus; *for He shall save his people from their sins.* This Blessing of making men *Holy* was so much the design of Christ's coming, that He had his very Name from it. Observe the words are; *He shall save his people from their sins*; not from the *punishment* of them: And (as will fully appear hereafter) that is the *primary*

mary ſence of them, which is moſt plainly expreſſed in them: That he ſhall ſave his people from the *puniſhment of ſin* is a true ſence too, but it is *ſecondary* and implied only; as this *latter* is the never failing and neceſſary conſequent of the *former* Salvation.

This again was foretold by *Zacharias*, betwixt his Conception and Birth. He ſaith, *Luke* 1.72, &c. *That God performed his covenant in ſending Chriſt*; which covenant conſiſts in this, *That He would grant us, that We being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might ſerve him without fear, in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our Life.*

Fourthly, We likewiſe find this expreſſed by *Simeon*, immediately upon his Birth, *Luke* 2.32. Where having called him God's *Salvation*, which He had prepared before the face of all people, he adds that, *He is a Light to lighten the Gentiles:* whereby is meant, that he ſhould bring them into the way of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs. *Holineſs* is in not a few places expreſſed by the Metaphor of *Light*, and *Wickedneſs* by that of *Darkneſs: Turning from Darkneſs to Light* is explained by * *Turning from the power of Satan unto God.* And the following clauſe, *viz.* And *the Glory of thy people Iſrael,*

* Act. 26.

rael, ſignifieth the ſame thing: Namely, that in the place of their outward and Ceremonial obſervances, called by the Apoſtle * *Beggarly Elements*; He ſhould bring in among them a far more Noble, *viz.* an inward ſubſtantial and Everlaſting Righteouſneſs; and by abrogating *that*, and eſtabliſhing only *this* Righteouſneſs, He ſhould enlarge their Church, an acceſſion of the Gentiles being by that means made unto it.

* Gal. 4. 9

Fifthly, This is expreſſed by S. *John* the Baptiſt, immediately before our Saviour's ſolemn entrance upon his office, as the buſineſs he was undertaking, *Matth.* 3. 11, 12. *I indeed baptize you with Water unto repentance* (that is eſpecially from the more plain and confeſſed exorbitances) *but he that cometh after me, is mightier than I, whoſe ſhoes I am not worthy to bear; he ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire*: (which will take away thoſe ſtains and pollutions, that *Water* cannot:) *whoſe fan is in his hand, and he will throughly purge his floor.*

Sixthly. Again, after our Saviour's entrance upon his office, he himſelf declared, that, *He came to call ſinners to Repentance*: And that he was ſo far from coming to deſtroy the Law and the Prophets, that he came

came πληρῶσαι, to fulfil, or perfect them, that is, by giving more and higher inſtances of Moral Duties than were before expreſly given: And he tells the Jews preſently after, that, *Except their Righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the Righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees* (that is, unleſs it be above their ~~Practical~~ Partial and meerly External Righteouſneſs) *they ſhall in no caſe enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* And he abundantly made it appear, (as will be quickly ſhewn) that the Reformation of mens lives, and Purification of their Natures were the Great Buſineſs that he deſigned.

Mat. 5. 17. Or πληρῶσαι, may ſignifie *Fully to Preach*, as Rom. 15. 19. & Col. 1. 25.

Laſtly, This was frequently aſſerted, after he forſook the World, by the Apoſtles he left behind him. S. *Peter* told his Countrey-men, Acts 3. 26. That as God ſent Chriſt *to bleſs* them, ſo the *Bleſſing* deſigned them by him, conſiſted *in turning them from their iniquities. To you firſt* (ſaith he) *God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs you, by turning every one of you from his iniquities.* Again, *Acts* 5. 31. The ſame Apoſtle, with others, ſaith that, *Him hath God exalted with his Right Hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of Sins.* *Repentance* firſt, and then *Forgiveneſs.* S. *John* tells us, 1 *Epiſt.* 3. 8. that,

for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. And S. *Paul* calleth the Gospel of Christ, *The Mystery of Godliness*, 1 Tim. 3. 16. *The Doctrine that is according to Godliness.* And gives us to understand that, that which the Grace of God which brings Salvation teacheth, is, *that denying Ungodliness, and all worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godlily in this Present World*, Tit. 2. 12.

1 Tim. 6. 3.

CHAP. III.

A particular Demonstration that Holiness *is the only Design of the* Precepts *of the Gospel. And that they require*, 1. *The Most Extensive Holiness*, 2. *The most Intensive. An Objection answered.*

BUT to give a more particular proof of what we have undertaken.

First, It is most apparent, That *Holiness* is the Design, the only Design of *the Christian Precepts*, and that this is the Mark which they are wholly levelled at. What the * Apostle spake of the *Jewish*, may be much more said of the *Christian* Law, that *It is Holy, just, and Good.* For as *Clemens*

* Rom. 7.

mens Alexandrinus in his *Pædagogus* ſaith, Ἐν χριστῷ νηπιότης τελειότης ἐστι, &c. *Even Infant-Chriſtianity is perfection, compared with the Law* or *the Moſaical Diſpenſation.*

There is no *Affirmative Precept* in the Goſpel, but it either Commands *Holineſs* in the general, or one or more Particular Vertue, or Habit of Holineſs, or ſome Eſſential Act or Acts of it; or Means and Helps to the Acquiring, Maintaining, or Encreaſe of it. Such as *Hearing* and *Reading the Word, Prayer, Meditation, Good Conference, Watchfulneſs againſt Temptations, Avoiding occaſions of evil,* &c.

And there is no *Negative Precept*, but doth forbid the Contrary to ſome one or more of thoſe Duties; but doth forbid ſome thing or other that doth tend either directly or indirectly, immediately or mediately, in its own nature or by reaſon of ſome Circumſtance to the depraving of Humane Nature, and rendring us *Perfectly Wicked*, or in ſome degree or other *leſs holy.*

To make this appear by going over the Several *Precepts* contained in the Goſpel, would be a work of too much time; but whoſoever, as he reads them, ſhall duly conſider each of them, cannot be to ſeek for Satisfaction, concerning the truth of

what I have now said; and I dare undertake he will readily acknowledge, That there is nothing that is not upon its own, or some one or other, account, greatly Becoming us, and Perfective of Humane Nature, in the whole Gospel *Commanded:* And that there is not any thing in it self, and in all respects innocent, there *forbidden.* This can be by no means said concerning the *Precepts* of the Law of *Moses*; but that it may concerning those of the Gospel, is absolutely Certain.

But my whole Discourse upon this present Argument shall be confined to these two Heads: Namely to shew, *That the Christian Precepts require the most* Extensive, *and most* Intensive *Holiness*; that is, exactly such a Holiness as hath been described.

First, *They require the most Extensive Holiness,* Not onely towards God, but also towards our Neighbour, and our selves. In the forecited place, *Tit.* 2. 12. S. *Paul* puts all these together, under the Phrases of *Living Soberly, Righteously, and Godlily,* as making up that *Holiness* which the Grace of God, that brings Salvation, teacheth. The *Precepts* of our Saviour command us not onely to give unto *God* the things that

that are *God's*; but alſo to *Cæſar* the things that are *Cæſar's*: Not only to obey *God* in all things, but to be ſubject likewiſe to every Ordinance of *Man* for the Lords Sake, that is, to every Ordinance of Man that doth not Contradict the Law of God: Not only to fear God, but alſo to honor the King, and to obey our ſpiritual Governors likewiſe, which watch for our Souls, &c. and to behave our ſelves towards all perſons ſutably to the Relations we ſtand in to them: Wives to ſubmit themſelves to their own Husbands, as unto the Lord; Husbands to love their Wives even as Chriſt loved the Church: Children to obey their Parents in the Lord; and Fathers not to provoke their Children to wrath, but to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: Servants to be obedient to their Maſters, with ſingleneſs of heart as unto Chriſt, &c. and Maſters to do the ſame things unto them, forbearing threatning, or a harſh behaviour towards them, knowing that they have a Maſter in Heaven, with whom is no reſpect of perſons. We Eph. 6. are commanded to love not our *Relations* or our *Friends* onely, but alſo *all Mankind*; and to do good to *all* without exception, though eſpecially to the *Houſhold*

of Faith; to good men. Nay our Saviour hath laid a ſtrict charge upon us, not to exclude our malicious *enemies* from our *love* (that is, *of benevolence*) but to pray for them that deſpitefully uſe us, and to Bleſs thoſe that Curſe us. Which Law as harſhly as it ſounds to Carnal Perſons, they themſelves cannot but acknowledge that what it enjoyneth, is heroically and highly vertuous.

Mat. 5.

Secondly, *The Chriſtian Precepts require the moſt Intenſive Holineſs*; Not onely *Negative* but *Poſitive*, as was now intimated; that is, Not onely the forbearance of what is evil, but the performance alſo of what is good: Not onely Holineſs of *Actions* and *Words*, but likewiſe of *Affections* and *Thoughts*: The worſhip of God with the Spirit, as well as with the outward man; a Holy frame and habit of mind, as well as a holy life. They forbid cheriſhing ſin in the *heart*, as well as practiſing it in the *Converſation*. They make *luſting after a Woman*, Adultery, as well as the *Groſs* Act of Uncleanneſs. They make *Malice*, Murther, as well as *Killing*; They forbid Coveting no leſs than defrauding; and being in love with this worlds goods, as much as getting them by unlawful means.

And

And I ſhall digreſs ſo far as to ſay, That there is infinite Reaſon that *Thoughts* and the inward workings of mens ſouls ſhould be reſtrained by Laws, upon theſe two accounts.

Firſt, Becauſe *Irregular Thoughts* and *Affections* are the immediate Depravers of Mens Natures; and therefore it is as neceſſary in order to the deſign of making men *Holy*, that *theſe* ſhould be forbidden, as that evil *Actions* and *Words* ſhould. But ſuppoſe this were otherwiſe; Yet

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But to proceed, *The Precepts* of the Goſpel command us not onely to perform good Actions, but alſo to do them after a right manner, with right ends, &c. or in one word, from good Principles. Whatſoever we do, to do it *heartily*, as to the

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Col. 3. 23. Rom. 12. 11. 1 Cor. 10. 31. 1 Pet. 1. 15 Mat. 5. 48.

Lord and not as to *men*. To be fervent in Spirit in our service of God. To do all to the glory of God. To be holy *as* he that hath called us is Holy, in all manner of Conversation. To be perfect as our heavenly Father is perfect: Which *Precepts* shew that we ought to imitate him, not onely in the *matter* of our actions, but likewise in the *qualifications* of them: Among which, that which I said is Essential to true Holiness, is a principal one; namely, To do good actions for those Reasons which moved God to enjoyn them, and, I adde, which make it pleasing to him to perform them himself, *viz.* because they are either in themselves and upon their own account excellent, worthy and most fit to be done, or are made so to be by some Circumstance.

Our whole Duty to God and our Neighbour (as our Saviour hath told us) is comprehended in the *love* of them: But the *love of God* required by him is a most *Intense* love: we are commanded to love him *with all the Heart and Soul, mind and strength*; And *that* of our Neighbour which he hath made our duty, is such, as for the *kind* of it, is like the love which we bear to our selves; such as will not permit us to wrong him in his *good name*,

Mat. 19. 19.

Tit. 3. 2.

any

any more than in his *eſtate* or *perſon*; ſuch as will not allow us *raſhly* to *ſpeak*, or ſo much as *think* ill of him; ſuch as will cauſe us to put the beſt conſtructions on thoſe actions of his that are capable of various interpretations, &c. And for the *degree*, ſuch, as will make us willing to lay down our very *lives* for him, that is, for the promoting of his eternal happineſs. 1 Cor. 13. 5. 1 John 3. 16.

To ſumme up all together, We are commanded to *adde to our faith vertue, to vertue knowledge, to knowledge temperance, to temperance patience, to patience Godlineſs, to Godlineſs Brotherly Kindneſs, and to Brotherly kindneſs Charity.* To behave our ſelves in all reſpects towards our Creatour as becometh his Creatures, and thoſe which are under unſpeakable obligations to him; Towards one another, as becometh thoſe that are indued with the ſame Common nature, and according to the diverſe relations, engagements and other Circumſtances we ſtand in each to other; and Towards our ſelves according as the Dignity of our Natures require we ſhould. In ſhort, whatſoever things are true, whatſoever things are honeſt, *Whatſoever things are juſt, whatſoever things are pure, whatſoever things are lovely, whatſoever things are of good report, whatſoever* 2 Pet. 1.

things

Phil. 4. *things have vertue and praise in them*, are the objects of the Christian Precepts, and by them recommended to us. Let any one read but our Saviours incomparable Sermon upon the Mount, the 12th to the *Romans*, and the third Chapter of the Epistle to the *Colossians*, and well consider them; and it will be strange should he find it difficult to assent to the truth of that Proposition.

Even *Trypho* himself, in the Dialogue betwixt *Justin Martyr* and him, confessed, that the *Precepts* contained in the Book called the *Gospel* are θαυμασὰ καὶ μεγάλα, *Great and Admirable*. He saith indeed, *that they are so admirable, as that he suspected them not to be by Humane Nature Observable*; but in that he spake not unlike to himself, that is a prejudiced and Carnal *Jew*.

If it be now objected, that notwithstanding what hath been said concerning the *Christian Precepts* recommending the most elevated Vertue to be practised by us, it is acknowledged by all Sober Christians, that they are not to be understood in so high a sense as to require of us indefective and unspotted Holiness, or at least that our Saviour will accept of and reward that Holiness which is far short of *Perfect*; and there-

therefore he can be no such Great Friend to it, as hath been affirmed: The answer is very easie and obvious, *viz.* That our Saviour's not rigidly exacting such a degree of Holiness as amounts to *Perfection*, proceeds from hence, that the attainment of it is in this state impossible to us; and therefore it is not to be attributed to his liking or allowance of the least Sin, but to his Special grace and good will to fallen Mankind: Nay, moreover it proceeds from his passionate desire that we may be as pure and holy, as our unhappy Circumstances will admit; he well knowing, that should he declare that nothing short of *Perfection* shall be accepted at our hands, he would make us desperate, and take the most effectual Course to cause us to give over all thoughts of becoming better, nay, and to let the reins loose unto all ungodliness. But yet nothing short of *Sincerity*, and *diligent, serious endeavors to abstain from all Sin*, will be admitted by him in order to our being made the objects of his Grace and Favour: And as for *Wilful* and *Presumptuous* Sins of what kind soever, he makes no allowances for them, but hath by himself and his Ministers declared very frequently, that they shall not be pardoned, without our unfeigned Re-

for-

formation from them. And, Lastly, notwithstanding the allowances and abatements that in tender Compassion to us he is pleased to make us, no less than our *absolutely Perfect* Holiness is designed by him, though not to be effected in *this*, yet in the *other* World.

CHAP. IV.

That Holiness *is the onely Design of the* Promises of the Gospel, *shewed in Two Particulars: And of the* Threatnings *therein Contained.*

SEcondly, The *Promises* and *Threatnings* of the Gospel have most apparently the promoting of *Holiness* for their onely Design.

First, The *Promises*, it is plain, have. This S. *Peter* assureth us, 2 *Epistle*, *ch.*1.*v.*4. *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and pretious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the Divine* Nature, *having escaped the Corruption that is in the world through lust.* And S. *Paul* doth more than intimate the same, in 2 Cor.7.1. *Having* (saith he) *these Promises, dearly beloved*, (*viz.* those which the foregoing Chapter

Chapter Concludes with) *let us cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting Holineſs in the fear of the Lord.* Again, *Rom.* 12. 1. *I beſeech you by the Mercies of God, that ye preſent your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your Reaſonable Service. And be ye not conformed to this preſent world, but be ye transformed by the Renewing of your Minds,* &c.

1. We always find theſe *promiſes* either limited to *Holy* perſons, or made uſe of as encouragements and exciting motives to *Holineſs.* The Apoſtle tells us, that it is *Godlineſs* which hath the *promiſes of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* 1 Tim. 4. The promiſe of the Beatifical viſion is made to *the Pure in Heart. Bleſſed are the Pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God.* That of the Kingdom of Heaven to the *Poor in Spirit,* or thoſe that are of humble and lowly tempers. The promiſe of obtaining Mercy to *the Merciful.* That of inheriting the Earth (of temporal felicity) to the *Meek,* or ſuch as live in obedience to Government, &c. That of Eternal life to thoſe that *patiently Continue in Well-doing.* That of ſitting with Chriſt on his Throne, to thoſe that *overcome,* that is, that mortifie their Luſts and corrupt affections. The Mat. 5. 8. verſ. 3. verſ. 7. verſ. 5. Rom. 2. 7. Rev. 3. 21. chap. 2. 10

pro-

promise of a Crown of life is used as a motive to perswade to *faithfulness to the Death.* But to what purpose do I multiply instances, when as there is not a particular *promise* throughout the whole Gospel, but it is expressed or plainly enough intimated, that its performance depends upon some duty of *Holiness* to be on our parts first performed, or at least heartily endeavoured. And whereas the Promises of Pardon, and of Eternal Life are very frequently made to *Believing*, there is nothing more evidently declared than that this *Faith* is such as purifieth the Heart, and is productive of Good Works.

2. Nay the *Nature of these Promises* is such, as is of it self sufficient to satisfie us, *That Holiness is the Design of them.*

1. This is manifestly true concerning the *Principal Promises*, or those which relate to the other life. They may be reduced to these three Heads; That *of the holy Spirit*; *of Remission of Sin*; and *of Eternal happiness in the Enjoyment of God.*

Now for the first of these, *viz. The Promise of the Spirit*, that is it to which we are beholden for grace and assistance in the great work of subduing Sin, and acquiring the habit of Holiness; and this is the very business for the sake

sake of which that Promise is made to us.

And for the second & third, they are such as none but holy Souls are capable of. That none but such are capable of, having the *Guilt* of their Sins removed, and of being freed from the displeasure and wrath of God, is self-evident; for the *Guilt of Sin* must needs remain while its *power* continues; these two are inseparable from each other: Sin is so loathsome and filthy a thing (as shall hereafter be shewn) that it is perfectly impossible that the blood of Christ it self should render a sinner lovely or not odious in the sight of God, any otherwise than by washing away the pollution of it. And nothing is more apparent, than that holy Souls alone are in a Capacity of the Happiness that consists in the Enjoyment of God in the other World; than that, as without Holiness no man *shall see* the Lord, (as saith the Author to the *Hebrews*) So without it none *can see* him: For the full and Complete participation of God, which our Saviour promiseth his Disciples and faithful followers, ariseth out of the likeness and Conformity of mens Souls to him: But there is such a perfect unlikeness and contrariety in impure and polluted souls to the

the infinitely Holy God, that it is impossible there should be any Communications from him to them, any friendly agreement and complacency between Him and them. *He is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither can evil dwell with him.* Psal. 5. 4. *What Communion hath Light with Darkness*, saith the Apostle, 2 Cor. 6. 14. But vicious and unholy souls are full of Darkness, whereas God is pure splendid Light, and in Him is no Darkness at all. The *Platonists* would not admit that any man is Capable of being acquainted with *Divine* things, that is not purged from that which they called ἡθυμία, and ἄλογία, *Remissness of Mind* and *Brutish Passions*. How utterly impossible then is it, that such as are not so, should be acquainted with the *Divinity* it self? *Hierocles* saith ὥσπερ ὀφθαλμῷ λημῶντι, &c. *As a Bleer eye cannot look upon σφόδρα φωτινὰ things very bright and shining, so a Soul unpossessed of vertue is unable to behold the Beauty of Truth:* How unable then is such a soul to behold the Beauty of God himself, to see him as he is, and be happy in the sight of him? Those eyes which have continually beheld Vanity (as saith an Excellent late writer of our own) would be dazled, not delighted, with the Beatifick Vision. *Thanks be to God*

God (saith the Apostle) *who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the Saints in Light.* Those can by no means partake of it, that are not by Holiness made *meet* and disposed for it. What happiness can we find in the enjoyment of God when he is of a perfectly contrary nature to our own? and moreover, how can we then enjoy him? There must be in us a likeness to him, or *we cannot see him as he is*; for S. *John* proves, that *when he appeareth, we shall be like him*, by this Argument. It was one of the Maximes of the Excellent *Socrates*: * *It is unlawful for an impure nature to touch pure Divinity.* Now this being *the Happiness* promised in the Gospel, we easily learn from the consideration of the *Nature* of it (it being not at all gross and sensual, but purely spiritual) what is the Design of those *Promises* that contain it. At the first hearing of them, though they should sound (as they do not) like *Absolute* ones; we may be certain that Holiness, and sincere endeavours after a participation of a Divine Nature must necessarily be tacit conditions of them, as without which our Souls cannot possibly be qualified and put into an apt disposition for them.

Col. 1. 12.

* Μὴ καθαρῶ καθαροῦ ἐφάπτεσθαι μὴ οὐ θεμιτὸν ἦν.

2. As the *Promises* which concern the

other life are ſuch as none but *Holy* Souls are *Capable* of, So thoſe that only relate to *this life* are ſuch as none but ſuch Souls will be *contented* with. They are onely *neceſſaries* which the Goſpel gives us an aſſurance of, and ſuch things as may be a help to the Exerciſe of *Vertue* and *Holineſs*; not *Superfluities* and ſuch as ſerve to gratifie liquoriſh appetites. So we are to underſtand that of our Saviour, *Mat.6.3.First ſeek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs; and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you:* The words foregoing ſhew, that by [*all theſe things*] we are onely to underſtand *meat, drink, and clothes.* The temporal bleſſings that Chriſt engageth himſelf to beſtow upon his Diſciples, are ſuch alone as tend to anſwer *moderate* deſires, not to ſatisfie *inordinate* cravings: in ſhort, they are onely ſuch as are needful to keep their bodies in ſuch a ſtate as that they may be meet habitations, and inſtruments of their ſouls, ſo long as it ſhall be fit for them to continue in them.

Secondly, And as for the *Threatnings* of the Goſpel, which are moſt terrible and diſmal, that they have the ſame Deſign that the *Promiſes* have, is out of Queſtion: For they are never uſed to ſcare men from any thing but what tends to pollute and de-

debauch their ſouls: And the end of them is every where to excite us effectually to diligence and induſtry in the purſuit of Real Righteouſneſs and Subſtantial Holineſs.

The wrath of God is revealed from Heaven in the Goſpel *againſt all Ungodlineſs, and Unrighteouſneſs of men:* Such as diſbelieving and diſobeying Chriſt's Goſpel, in the *general*; And *particularly*, ſuch as *Idolatry*, *Adultery*, *Fornication* and *Uncleanneſs* of all ſorts, *Theft*, *Covetouſneſs*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Reviling*, *Wrath*, *Contemptuous Behaviour*, *Implacability*, *Unmercifulneſs*, *Illiberality*, *Malice*, *Cenſorioufneſs*, *Lying*, *Pride*, *Hypocriſie*, *Rebellion* and *Diſobedience to Governours*, &c. And therefore are the Committers of theſe and ſuch like ſins threatned, that ſo thoſe, which from the conſideration of their vile nature and ugline ſs will not be withdrawn from them, may from a principle of ſelf-preſervation be afraid of them: And our Saviour is infinitely Good to us in his Terrifying *Threatnings*, as well as in his Alluring *Promiſes*. For (as *Clemens Alex.* in his *Pædagogus*, ſaith) *His Threatnings proceed not from Anger, but from Great Good Will; and he therefore threatneth puniſhment, that ſinners being thereby ſcared into Reformation,*

Rom. 1. 18

1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. Mat. 5. 22. Mat. 11. 26. cha. 18. 28 cha. 25. 42 1 John 3. 15. Gal. 5. 1. Revel. 21. 27. Jam. 4. 6. Matth. 23. 13 Rom 13. 1, 2.

may by that means prevent their being punish'd. He doth not (as he proceeds) *like a Serpent bite before he giveth warning.* And therefore onely doth he give warning, that he may not bite.

CHAP. V.

That the Promoting of Holiness *was the Design of* our Saviour's whole life and Conversation among men; *both of his* Discourses *and* Actions. *And that he was an eminent Example of all the parts of Vertue,* viz. *Of the Greatest* Freedom, Affability *and* Courtesie: *The Greatest* Candor *and* Ingenuity: *The most marvellous* Gentleness *and* Meekness: *The Deepest* Humility: *The Greatest* Contempt of the World: *The most Perfect* Contentation: *The most Wonderful* Charity *and* Tendrest Compassion: *Stupendious* Patience, *and* Submission to the Divine Will: *The most Passionate* Love of God, *and* Devoutest Temper of Mind towards him: Mighty Confidence *and* Trust in God. *An Objection answered: The most Admirable Prudence.*

THirdly, The Promoting of Holiness was *the* Design of our Saviour's

our's *Whole Life, and Converſation among Men.* All his Diſcourſes that are on Record carried on this great buſineſs: Not onely his *Sermons*, but likewiſe thoſe which were leſs ſolemn, and that *occaſionally*, and as it were *by the Bye* dropt from Him. There is not a *Parable* he uttered, but ſome thing highly conducing to the inſtilling of vertue into thoſe to whom he directed it, was the *Moral* of it: And all advantages and occaſions he greedily embraced for the infuſing of true piety and holineſs into the Souls of Men.

To give a few inſtances: When it was told him that his Mother and Brethren ſought for him; He took that opportunity to tell them, that *whoſoever will do the will of God, the ſame is his Brother, Siſter, and Mother*, *Mark* 3. 35. When he obſerved a reaſoning among the Diſciples, which of them ſhould be the Greateſt in the Kingdom of God; He took occaſion from thence to preach to them the neceſſity of the Grace of *Humility* and *becoming as little Children*, of *Self-denial*, *Mortification of their moſt beloved Luſts*, and to teach them ſeveral other very excellent Leſſons, *Matth.* 18. in the beginning. Upon a certain woman's ſaying to Him, *Bleſſed is the Womb that bare Thee, and the Paps*

that gave Thee Suck; He minded his Hearers of the Blessedness of *Obedient* persons: *yea rather* (said he) *are they blessed that hear the word of God, and keep it. Luke* 11. 28. Upon *Martha's* desiring him to command her Sister to help her in serving, he reproved her over-solicitousness about the affairs of this life, and put her in mind of the *one thing needful*, *Luk.* 10. 41. From a Pharisees marvelling that he washed not before dinner, he took an Advantage to reprove their Superstition, Hypocrisies, Partial Righteousness, Pride and several other Immoralities, *Luke* 11. 38, &c. From a Person's desiring him to speak to his Brother to divide the inheritance with him, he took an opportunity to discourse against *Covetousness*, and to dissuade from setting the heart upon earthly riches, from solicitousness and Carking Carefulness and to exhort to several most weighty and important duties, *Luke* 12. 15, &c. Upon some mens talking of the Lamentable disaster that befel the *Galileans*, he took occasion to give a caution against *Rash Judging*, and to preach to them the absolute necessity of *Repentance*, as that without which they should all perish *Luke* 13. *begin.* Upon his observing how that at a Feast they chose the Uppermost Rooms, he laid hold

hold of that opportunity to teach the vertue of *Humility*, *Luke* 14. 7. And in the ſame Chapter he took the advantage that was offered him by other Paſſages for the inſtilling of diverſe other profitable Inſtructions. And you may find in the four Evangeliſts abundance of Obſervations of this Nature.

And as it was the buſineſs of all his *Diſcourſes* to teach vertue, ſo was it alſo of all his *Actions*: He Preach'd *holineſs* to mens *Eyes* no leſs than to their *Ears*, by giving them the moſt ſtupendious Example in his own Perſon, of all the parts of it. His whole Life was one Continued Lecture of the moſt Excellent *Morals*, the moſt Sublime and exact Vertue.

For inſtance; He was a Perſon of the Greateſt *Freedom*, *Affability*, and *Courteſie*, there was nothing in his Converſation that was at all Auſtere, Crabbed or Unpleaſant. Though he was always *ſerious*, yet was he never *ſowr*, ſullenly Grave, Moroſe or Cynical; but of a marvellouſly converſable, ſociable and benign temper. Thoſe who had Checks from his Diſciples, as rude and troubleſome, were never accuſed by Him for being ſo, but were moſt kindly liſtned to, and lovingly received: even *little Children*, as unwelcome as they were to

them, were tenderly embraced, and blest by him. He never blamed any for interrupting him in his Discourses, or other business; Nor was put into the least Chafe by their so doing, but ever patiently heard them, and sent none of them from him (supposing they had no ill design in coming to him) without Satisfaction. When he was invited to mens Tables (as little as their chear could tempt him) he readily went; nor did he esteem it as disbecoming his gravity to make one at a Marriage-feast; nor to contribute to it *himself* neither. He did not think himself *defiled* by bad company, nor baulked the Society of Publicans and Sinners themselves, (as loathsome as they were to *worse* men, the *Pharisees*) but freely in order to the reforming of them sate down, when there was occasion, and conversed with them. His first entertainment of the woman of *Canaan*, as uncivil as it might seem, was nothing less than so; for the unkind and contemptuous Language he gave her, though it was but the same which the *Jews* always bestowed upon those people, proceeded from no *Contempt* of her; nor was it designed, as the event shewed, in the least to discourage her, but on the Contrary, to give her occasion to shew the *Greatness* of her

her *Faith*, in the anſwer ſhe returned to it. The ever and anon infirm, imprudent and impertinent talk of his Diſciples and others, could not at any time put him out of his good temper, but only gave him an opportunity of imparting to them ſeaſonable Inſtructions and Wiſe Counſels.

The *Candour* alſo and *Ingenuity* of his Spirit did to great admiration diſcover it ſelf: Whereof take this one Inſtance. Where as he (as was ſaid) forbad cenſorious judging of other men; and commanded, conſequently, to put the beſt conſtructions upon thoſe actions of others that are capable of various interpretations, he hath given us no ſmall encouragement ſo to do, by his behaviour towards thoſe three Diſciples, whom he could not perſwade for a little while to forbear ſleeping, no not in his *Agony*; as infinitely great obligations as he had laid upon them, to do any thing he ſhould pleaſe to deſire of them. That their *ſleeping* at ſuch a time looked as exactly as could be like an infallible argument of extreme unconcernedneſs for their bleſſed Lord, and of exceſſive coolneſs of affection to him, eſpecially he having (I ſay) before deſired them to *Watch* with him, and given them the reaſon why he did ſo: Yet for all that, would he impute it to no worſe a cauſe

cause than meer infirmity, nor entertained any ill opinion of them upon that account; and when they themselves had nothing to say to excuse their fault, he makes this Apology himself for them; *The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak:* Nay though, for all this, and notwithstanding that friendly expostulation of his with *Peter*, [*Couldest thou not watch with me one hour?*] they fell asleep again, yet did he not at his last return to them pass any censure upon them, but carried it towards them as he was wont to do.

And the *Gentleness* and *meekness* of his Disposition was very marvellous: When *James* and *John* in a great heat, would have perswaded him to call for fire from Heaven after the Example of *Elias* to consume the *Samaritans* for their inhospitable and barbarous refusal to give him entertainment, he rebuked them immediately for that revengful motion, and gave them this reply; *Ye know not what manner of Spirit ye are of; For the Son of Man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them*, *Luke* 9. 55. and so, silently went his ways, without giving them so much as a lash of his Tongue for so rude an affront. Never had any one so strong provocations to Wrath and Revenge, as the Blessed Jesus; but never were either

either ſo undiſcernible in any as they were in him. In his carriage indeed towards the Phariſees he might ſeem to ſome to be once or twice tranſported with a fit of unordinary paſſion, but it would not have become the zeal he had for God and true Goodneſs to behave himſelf otherwiſe towards ſuch Monſtrouſly immoral wretches and moſt hatefully conceited and proud Hypocrites. Nor was his overturning the Tables of the Money-changers, or Whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple, any other than a very befitting and ſeemly expreſſion of his juſt diſpleaſure againſt thoſe Sacrilegious and Prophane people. But he was never ſo concerned for himſelf, for his own Reputation or ought elſe that belonged to him, as to be put into the leaſt heat by all the ignominious Language that was from time to time given him, and the vile reproaches and unſufferable abuſes that were heap'd upon Him. When he was acoſted with a never-to-be-parallel'd impudence by his Old Diſciple *Judas* in the Front of an Armed Multitude; who could have forborn to receive ſuch a villainous and intolerably baſe Traytor with the moſt Emphatical Expreſſions of an Exaſperated and Enraged mind? But with what wonderful

Mild-

Mildnes was that Monster of Ingratitude & Dissimulation treated by our Dear Lord! The worst words he bestowed upon him being these, *Judas, betrayest thou the Son of man with a Kiss?* Nor did he more angrily bespeak the wicked Followers than he did their Leader, when they rudely assaulted and apprehended him. And so far was he from revenging himself upon them, as able as he was to do it effectually; and notwithstanding (as he gave them to understand) that he could, if he listed, have no fewer than twelve Legions of Angels imployed in his service, that he wrought a miracle for the healing of the wound that one of them received from the Sword of *Peter*; and withal charged him to put up that Weapon.

Nor was it ever in the Power either of the Calumniating and black Tongues, or rude and Cruel hands, of his bittereſt Enemies to draw from him so much as a reviling or fierce word. But of so rarely moderate a temper and serene spirit was he, that (as S. *Peter* saith) *When he was reviled, he reviled not again; When he suffered, he threatned not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously. He gave his back to the Smiters, and his Cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, he hid not his face from*

1 Pet. 2. 23.

Isa. 50. 6.

from ſhame and ſpitting. He was oppreſſed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; He is brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a Sheep before her ſhearers is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth. And thus hath he taught us by the moſt excellent Example to obey thoſe *Precepts* of his whereby the Practice of that vertue of *Meekneſs* and ſedateneſs of ſpirit towards injurious perſons is injoyned on us. Iſa. 53. verſ. 7.

Nor was his *Meekneſs* leſs to be parallel'd or more obſervable than his great *Humility*; from whence indeed that proceeded, and was of this no ſmall expreſſion. And eſpecially conſidering his high deſcent, moſt tranſcendent perfections and infinite worth, it was impoſſible he ſhould have been ſo *meek* as to put up ſuch contemptuous uſage and inexpreſſibly provoking affronts as he did, if his *Humility* were not equal to his other excellencies, if he had not been moſt lowly minded and of a profoundly ſubmiſs ſpirit. *God* onely had the Glory of all his mighty works, he would not aſcribe to *himſelf* the leaſt. *The Father*, ſaid he, *that dwelleth in me, he doth the works*, John 14. 10. *Verily, verily I ſay unto you, the Son can do nothing of himſelf, but what he ſeeth the Father do: For, whatſoever things he doth, theſe doth the Son likewiſe,*

wise. John 5.19. *I can of mine own self do nothing; as I hear, I judge; and my judgement is just, because I seek not mine own Will, but the Will of the Father which hath sent me,* vers. 30 —— *I do nothing of my self: but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things,* John 8.28.

Though He was *King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the Prince of the Kings of the Earth,* yet did he hide his greatness, told his Disciples that *his Kingdom is not of this world,* and chose the condition of a Subject and a private Man in it: Nor would he be perswaded to assume to himself so much authority, as judging but between two persons in a case of Civil right did amount unto. In the above-cited place (*Luke* 12. 15.) When one desired him, to speak to his Brother, that he divide the inheritance with him, he returned him this Answer, *Man who made me a judge or a Divider over you?* Nay he put himself into the Condition, not onely of a *private,* but also of a *mean,* a most *despicably mean* person. As He chose to be born of a *mean* Woman, in the *meanest* and even *vilest* of places, a Stable, where a Manger was his Cradle, and Brute Beasts his Chamber-fellows; so did he afterwards subject himself to his poor Mother, and the Carpenter her Husband.

He

He was not unacquainted, when he was but a Child, with the Nobility of his Deſcent, the Greatneſs of his Extraction, He even then did well underſtand whoſe Son He was, and that no leſs a Perſon was His Father than the Infinite God of Heaven and earth; for ſaid He to *Joſeph* & *Mary*, when after a ſorrowful ſearch after him they found him in the Temple, *Wiſt ye not that I muſt be about my Father's Buſineſs?* Yet notwithſtanding *He went down with them from Jeruſalem, and came to Nazareth, and was Subject unto them*, *Luke* 2.49, 51. And under *Joſeph*, though he knew him to be but his Reputed Father (if we may believe * one of the moſt Ancient Fathers) he wrought at his own Trade, and, as he ſaith, τεκτονικὰ ἔργα ἐφρόνει, did Carpentry-work; and particularly buſied himſelf in making ἀροτρα καὶ ζυγὰ *Ploughs and Yokes.*

* *Juſtin Martyr.*

Again, the perſons that he took for his moſt intimate Aſſociates were of no better quality than ſorry Fiſhermen, and men of the loweſt rank. As for his worldly eſtate, I cannot ſay 'twas *mean*, for he had none at all (that is, but what he was beholden to others for.) *The Foxes*, ſaid he, *have holes, and the birds of the air neſts, but the Son of man hath not where he may lay his head.*

And

And as for *employments*, he thought not himself too good to undertake the *vilest*, even one in comparison of which making *Ploughs* and *Yokes* was most Gentile, *viz. The washing of his Disciples feet.* In short, so marvellously humble was this Infinitely *Great* Person, that (as he saith, *Matth.* 20. 28.) *He came not to be ministred unto, but to minister*; And was *in this world as one that serveth*, Luke 22. 27. and that, *though he was rich, he became poor, that we*
2 Cor. 8. 9. *through his poverty might be rich.* That, *though he was in the form of God, he thought it no robbery* (or spoil) *to be equal with God; but made himself of no Reputation, and took upon him the form of a Servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross*, Phil. 2. 6, 7. And our Saviour hath declared that he was our Pattern both in his *Meekness* and *Humility*; For, *Learn* (said he) *of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart*, Matth. 11. 29. And therefore did he submit to that meanest office of a *Servant* (which was but now mentioned) that we might from the Consideration of his Example, not look upon the lowest, whereby we may serve our Brethren, as below us: For, after he had washed

waſhed his Diſciples feet, and was ſate down again, he ſaid thus to them, *John* 13. 12. *Know ye what I have done unto you? Ye call me Maſter and Lord, and ye ſay well, for ſo I am: If I then your Lord and Maſter have waſhed your feet, ye alſo ought to waſh one anothers feet. For I have given you an example, that ye ſhould do, as I have done unto you. Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, the Servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is ſent, greater than he that ſent him. If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

Conſidering what hath been ſaid of his chuſing ſo mean and deſpicable a condition in this world, I need not ſpend time in ſhewing what an Example he hath given us of *Contempt of it.* Never was any one ſo dead to its pleaſures as he was: Nor were ever its Glories ſo trampled on by the feet of any, as by our *Saviour's*: And that, not as were the Carpets of *Plato* by that Cynick *Diogenes*, who was truly enough (no queſtion) told by that great Philoſopher, that he trod under foot the pride of *Plato*, with a greater Pride; for he was guilty of no inſolent behaviour either towards Great men, or their Greatneſs, nor of any thing that looked in the leaſt like it. But he gave moſt eminent demonſtrations

of the mean opinion he had of Popularity and Applauſe among men, of Titles of Honour, and Vaſt Revenues, and that he infinitely deſpiſed them in compariſon of mental Endowments and accompliſhments. He confuted the idle fancies of the world concerning theſe and the like things, and diſparaged thoſe vain eſtimations that are founded upon them, in that he choſe to be wholly devoid of them, and in the very other extreme to thoſe which abounded with them: whereby he likewiſe ſignified how little evil he apprehended in Diſeſteem, Reproach and Poverty; which we vain Creatures have ſuch frightful conceptions of, and ſo greatly dread; in that he did not at all matter them, nor in the leaſt concern himſelf at them.

So Great, Generous, and Gallant a Soul had he; that he was ſo far from ſuffering his mind to be at all diſquieted with them, that He voluntarily and freely choſe them. For it lay in his power to be the *Richeſt* man under Heaven, and moſt to abound with this Worlds Goods, if it had ſo pleaſed him; and he could, if he had liſted, have been alſo the moſt *popular* perſon upon earth; could always have kept the Credit which for a while he had among the Common People, and gained the like among

among all ſorts: For he had infinitely the Advantage above all that ever appeared upon this Stage of the Word to have raiſed to himſelf a moſt mighty Renown, and to be adored by all people. So that the truth of that ſaying of *Epictetus*, [*They are not the things themſelves which ſo affright and ſcare men, but the falſe opinions they have conceived of them*,] is greatly confirmed as to the forementioned reputed evils by our Saviour's Practice.

τὰ πράγματα αὐτὰ οὐ φοβεῖ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀλλὰ τὰ περὶ αὐτῶν δόγματα.

And this Bleſſed Perſon, *Chuſing* ſo mean and contemptibly poor a condition of Life in the World, I need not tell you that he was perfectly *contented* with it; nor that he was altogether free (though he had many times ſcarcely from hand to mouth) from thoughtfulneſs & anxiety of mind concerning his future maintenance. For as he Cautioned his Diſciples againſt taking thought for their Life, what they ſhould eat, what they ſhould drink, and wherewith they ſhould be clothed; & ſhewed the folly and ſinfulneſs thereof, as proceeding from diſtruſtfulneſs of the Divine providence, (*Matt.*6.25,&c.) So was he ſo far from being guilty of that fault himſelf, that he was no leſs *liberal* than he was *poor*. For when he was provided with a ſmall pittance of victuals, inſtead of hoarding it up, or being

ſaving of it, he would not think much of ſpending it upon others whoſe needs craved it: We read twice of his beſtowing the little ſtock that he and his Diſciples had gotten between them, upon the Hungry Multitude, and of his working a Miracle to make it hold out among them.

And how full he was of *Charity*, and *tender Compaſſion*, is beyond expreſſion: For as he commended to his Diſciples and inculcated upon them nothing more, nor ſcarcely ſo much; ſo in the exerciſe of no vertue was he more exemplary. We read often of the yerning of his Bowels towards miſerable mortals, and his Pity did always exert it ſelf in acts of Mercy. Never did any make application to him for deliverance from the Evils that did afflict them, that had not their requeſts granted them: Nor were any more forward to beg relief of any kind of him, than he was to beſtow it upon them: Nay he frequently made poor Creatures the objects of his mercy before it was ſought for by them. It was even his whole buſineſs to oblige the world by ſignal kindneſſes, and (as ſhall be farther ſhewn anon) he continually went up and down doing good either to the bodies or ſouls of men. Nay his charity was of ſo large and Univerſal extent,

tent, that the Wicked and unthankful, and even his bittereſt enemies, were (as well as others) very ample partakers of it. Whereas the duty of bleſſing thoſe that curſe us, and praying for thoſe that diſpitefully uſe us, is to our corrupt natures one of the harſheſt and moſt difficult of any he hath impoſed upon us, he hath taken a courſe by the admirable Example he hath herein given us, to make it one of the eaſieſt and moſt pleaſant to us. For the Deviliſh Malice that by the vileſt of men was expreſt towards him, could not in the leaſt imbitter his ſpirit or harden his heart againſt them: Nor could he be diſſwaded by it from perſiſting in doing good to them: but continued to entreat them to accept of life from him, to grieve at their infidelity, and with tears to bewail their moſt obſtinate perverſeneſs. And laſtly, when their inveterate and implacable hatred came to vent it ſelf in the cruelleſt and moſt barbarous manner imaginable upon him, did he pray to his Father for them; even whilſt they were tormenting him, did he beſeech him to forgive them; Nay, and in order thereunto laid down his very life for them; even for them, I ſay, that took it from him.

And this gives occaſion to diſcourſe

something of his most wonderful *Patience*, & the stupendious submission of his Soul to God, which he gave us in his Extreme sufferings an Example of. We are exhorted, *Heb.*12.1,2. *to run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the Author and finisher of our Faith; who for the joy that was set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame*, &c. The Ignominy that was cast upon him by ungodly Creatures, he despised; and as for the excessive tortures felt by him, them he endured: He did not indeed *despise* these also, but neither did he *faint* under them; according as we are forbidden to do, *vers.* 5. of the now mentioned Chapter, *My son, despise not thou the Chastisement of the Lord, neither faint when thou art rebuked of him.* There were on the one hand no *Stoical* Rants heard from him, such as that of *Possidonius* in the Presence of *Pompey* (when he was afflicted with a fit of the Gout, or some such disease,) *viz. Nihil agis dolor, &c. O pain, thou art an insignificant thing, I don't matter thee:* For we find that our Saviour had as quick a sense of pain, as have other men; and his Agony in the Garden did so affect his soul, as to force, θρόμβους αἵματος, *Clodders of blood* through the Pores of his Body. We read

read that he was *ſore amazed*, and *very heavy*; and he told his Diſciples that *his ſoul was exceeding ſorrowful, even unto death:* But yet on the other hand, notwithſtanding the immenſe weight and moſt heavy Preſſure of *Grief* his mind ſuffered under, through his Fathers withholding the wonted influences of his love from him, and the intolerable torments of *body* that he underwent, (though both in regard of the greatneſs of his ſufferings, and alſo his Moſt perfect innocence, and therefore non-deſert of them, he might have the greateſt temptations Imaginable to be *impatient*) he never uttered a murmuring or diſcontented word, nor conceived the leaſt diſpleaſure at the Divine Majeſty, or doubted either of his *Juſtice* or *Goodneſs*; but entirely ſubmitted himſelf to this his ſevere diſpenſation of Providence, and willingly acquieſced in it. He prayed indeed to his Father, that this Bitter *Cup, if it were poſſible, might paſs from him*; but it was with this condition, that it might ſeem good to him. And as ſo much is implied in thoſe words [*If it be poſſible*] ſo is it expreſſed, *Luke* 22. 42. where it is ſaid, *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me:* And it immediately followeth; *Nevertheleſs not my will,*

but thine be done; according as he hath, in the abſolute form he left us, required us to pray. And again, ſaith he, *John* 18. 11. *The Cup which my Father giveth me, ſhall I not drink it?* And *John* 12. 28. After he had put up the forementioned Petition to be delivered from that moſt diſmal hour that was approaching near him, he doth as it were, *recall* it preſently, in theſe words, *But for this cauſe came I unto this hour*; and then puts up this ſecond, *Father, Glorifie thy name:* which is plainly as much as if he had ſaid, *Father, as dreadful and terrifying as the thoughts are of my future ſufferings, ſeeing Glory will redound to thy ſelf by them, I am not only contented but alſo deſirous to undergo them.*

Celſus having mentioned that celebrated Bravado of *Anaxarchus* to the Tyrant of *Cyprus*, when he Cruelly pounded him in his Mortar; and the merry ſaying of *Epictetus* to his Maſter when he brake his Leg, and thereupon ſcoffingly demanded of the Chriſtians, what ſaying like to either of thoſe, was uttered by their God in the midſt of his ſufferings, *Origen* makes this handſome Reply to him, *viz.* That our Saviour's *ſilence*, in the midſt of the Tortures he endured, ſhewed greater Patience and Fortitude of mind, than did all

the

the *sayings* of the Greek Philosophers in the like cases: And he adds that those words of Christ, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt*, were not onely φωνὴ ἐνδεδωκότος, εὐαρεσκουμένου δὲ τοῖς συμβαίνουσιν, &c. *the voice of one that patiently suffered, but also that was well pleased with his sufferings*, and spake his preference of what was appointed for him by the Divine Providence before his own desires and natural affections.

In the next place, our Saviour gave us the most noble and eminent example of *Love to God*, and the devoutest temper of mind towards him. That love of him, with all the heart and soul, mind and strength which he commended to us as our duty, did he himself give the highest demonstrations of. His last mentioned *Patience*, and perfect submission to the Divine Pleasure under the most Dreadful sufferings, is alone sufficient to Convince us that his *Love* to his Father was most *intense*: For it was utterly impossible that *his will* should be so entirely resigned up to *the will of God*, if his *love* of him had not been, *as sincere*, *so* of the *highest* degree and absolutely perfect. So his heavenly Father might thereby be Glorified, he was willing to endure the extremest miseries, that ever were inflicted on any Mor-

Mortal: And indeed his meer well interpreting ſo ſevere a Providence was a great and very ſignificant expreſſion of no ſmall affection. And beſides, it was (as he told
John 4. his Diſciples) his very *meat to do the will of Him that ſent him, and to finiſh his work.* As he was heartily well pleaſed to ſuffer his will; ſo he took infinite *Content, Satisfaction* and *Delight* in the *doing* of it. It was to him the moſt pleaſant thing in the whole world to be about his Father's Buſineſs; and therein he *abounded*, and was indefatigable. All that he did was referred by him to the honour of God; and of each of his *Glorious works* he gave him the *Glory*, and *him* onely: which thing was no leſs an argument of the *ardency* of his *Love*, than (as we have ſaid it is) of the *depth* of his *Humility*. In all his ways he acknowledg'd God, and took all occaſions to make mention of him, and to ſpeak of his Excellent Perfections. When the Ruler called him but *Good* Maſter; which was an Epithet, had he been but a meer man, he was infinitely worthy of; as ſleight an occaſion as this may ſeem to ſome, it minded him to ſpeak of *God's Goodneſs*, and he preſently replyed, *Why calleſt thou me good? there is none good* (that is originally and from himſelf) *but God*

God onely. He was much in delightful converſe with God, and in prayer to him, and ever and anon retired from all company for that purpoſe; according as he hath enjoyned us to do, *Mat.* 6. 5, 6. And we read *Luke* 6. 12. of his continuing on a Mountain alone a whole night in Prayer.

A mighty *confidence* and *Truſt in God*, as it could not but be an effect of our Saviour's moſt Paſſionate *Love* to him, ſo did he give of it very ſtrange inſtances. The Storm that put his Diſciples into a dreadful conſternation, could not terrifie, nor ſo much as diſcompoſe him; No, though he was ſuddenly awaked out of a ſound ſleep by their diſmal cries. When he was hoyſed up into the Air by his Grand Adverſary, the Devil, and ſet upon a pinacle of the Temple, and then by abuſing Scripture ſolicited to caſt himſelf down; as much as he ſeemed to be abandoned to his power, and under as great a diſadvantage as he was through extreme faſting, his *mind* was as *ſtrong* as his *body weak*, his Conſtancy remained unſhaken, his thoughts undiſordered, and with an undaunted courage he readily replyed to him, *It is written again, Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God: Matt.* 4. 5. Where you

you have alſo two other ſignal inſtances of the like nature. By all which he ſhewed that his *truſt in God* was ſo invincibly ſtrong, and his *adherence* to him ſo inſeparably cloſe, that the utmoſt attempts and fierceſt aſſaults of the Devil could have no other effect than to prove them ſo. Our Saviour could never be prevailed upon to go the leaſt *Step* out of God's way, in order to his preſervation from the moſt eminent dangers, ſo firm was his *Faith* in him: And he ſtill doing the things that were pleaſing in his ſight, he was confidently and undoubtedly aſſured of the Continuance of his preſence with him. This he hath himſelf told us, *John* 8.29. *And he that hath ſent me, is with me, the Father hath not left me alone, for I do always thoſe things that pleaſe him.*

So viſible and apparent was his *Truſt in God*, that when he was given up to his Adverſaries moſt barbarous rage, they themſelves could not but take notice of it, and ſcoffingly when he hung on the Croſs (and therefore ſeemed to be in a deſperate condition) did they upbraid him with it: *He truſted in God*, ſaid they, *let him deliver him now if he will have him, for he ſaid, I am the Son of God*, *Mat.*27.43. And where as it hath been objected by ſome

ſome of our Saviour's Adverſaries that a little before his death, he expreſſed very great diſtruſt, if not perfect deſpair of his Father's love, in that Tragical exclamation, *My God, my God, Why haſt thou forſaken me?* There are thoſe that conceive that it may be ſatisfactorily enough anſwered, that it is an unreaſonable and moſt barbarous thing to take any advantage from words uttered in the very *pangs* of death, accompanied with unſupportable torment, to the prejudice of thoſe they are ſpoken by; it being not ordinarily ſuppoſable that thoſe can be *themſelves* that are in ſuch Circumſtances; and why the *man* Jeſus, or our Saviour according to his *humane nature* ſhould not be under as great diſadvantages as others in ſuch a condition, (He being (as was ſaid) no leſs ſenſible of pain than others were) no reaſon can doubtleſs be given by us; But however we ſtand not in any neceſſity of this Reply. But I ſay, ſecondly, Though we ſhould ſuppoſe our Saviour to be now as perfectly maſter of his thoughts as he ever was, theſe words may not be underſtood in ſo harſh a ſence, for they were but a repetition of the firſt verſe of the 22. Pſalm; and thereby he declared himſelf to be the true *Meſſiah*, for whom it is ap-

apparent (and by the Antient Jews themſelves not doubted) that this Pſalm was penned; and is not to be underſtood to relate to *David*'s caſe only, but alſo to *his* whom he often perſonated, and was a Type of. Nor can it be gathered from our Saviour's rehearſal of theſe words, that it is in the leaſt probable that he either concluded or at all doubted that he was utterly rejected and caſt off by his Father, but the contrary: For ſeveral verſes in the forementioned *Pſalm* do give us aſſurance that they are not there to be ſo underſtood; for *David* doth diverſe times afterward, not onely pray for, but likewiſe expreſſeth good *hopes*, nay and *undoubted aſſurance* of a gracious deliverance, and praiſeth God for it too, as if it were already effected. So that this ſad complaint of the Bleſſed *Jeſus*, as it could not be occaſioned by the leaſt *diſtruſt*, ſo it may be more than preſumed, to have proceeded from the higheſt and intenſeſt degree of *Love*, which cauſed in his ſoul the moſt pungent and ſmart ſenſe of his Father's hiding his face, and abſenting himſelf (though but for a while) from him. But the leaſt favourable interpretation that it is capable of is no worſe than this, *viz.* That our Saviour did thereby expreſs

expreſs how exceſſive the miſery was which he then felt, eſpecially ſince the word [*Lama*] doth ſignifie *How* as well as *Why*. But laſtly, his Dying words and the laſt he uttered did expreſs his retaining his *confidence in God* (as much as he might ſeem to be caſt off by him) to the very laſt; which were theſe, *Father, into thine Hands I commend my Spirit.*

I will inſtance in one Vertue more wherein our Saviour was alſo ſingularly exemplary. Whereas he adviſed his Diſciples to be *wiſe as Serpents* and *Innocent as Doves*, they beheld in his Converſation a pattern to walk by in followiug the former as well as the latter part of this advice: Nor was the *Wiſdom of the Serpent* leſs Conſpicuous in him, than was the *Innocence of the Dove*. *Prudence* is the firſt of the Primitive vertues, or of thoſe from whence all other take their Original, and are derived: She is the chief Governneſs of humane actions; and thoſe which are performed without her direction, do want a main circumſtance that is neceſſary to give them the denomination of truly vertuous. A raſh and heady doing of thoſe actions which are for the matter of them praiſe-worthy, will render them culpable as to the manner of their performance:

And

And he that hath no regard to *Prudence*, though he may do good things, and possibly may some times mean well, yet he will never merit the Commendation of a Well-doer. I say therefore that our blessed Saviour, as he hath by his *Example*, no less than by his *Doctrine*, taught us the exercise of all other vertues, so hath he of this also; and his prudence did wonderfully discover it self through his whole life. As very great as was his zeal for the *Glory of God*, and the *good of men*, it was not too strong for, nor over-match'd his *Reason*; it was not a *blind* Zeal; but he was ever very careful to give each of his Actions their due Circumstances. As eagerly as he was bent upon accomplishing the work that he was sent into the world about, he was not for making more haste than good speed. He shewed great *prudence* in his injunctions, his preaching, and several discourses: He never urged any duties *unseasonably*, and had a care not to give such severe Precepts to his Novice Disciples as might discourage and overburthen them. He was not for putting a piece of new Cloth into an old Garment, nor new Wine into old Bottles.

See Mat. 9.14. to 17

He very wisely *timed* his discourses; did not preach all his Doctrines at once: What was

was ſaid of the Orator *Demoſthenes*, cannot be truly affirmed of him, *viz. That he knew what to ſay well enough, but not what not to ſay:* For as he well underſtood what Doctrines to Preach, ſo did he alſo what *not* to Preach. *He ſpake the word unto them as they were able to hear it*, *Mark* 4. 33. And, ſaid he, *John* 16. 12. *I have yet many things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* He knew both when to ſpeak, and when to hold his peace; and in whatſoever he ſaid, he conſidered the *genius*, *temper* and *capacity* of his Auditors. He would *not caſt Pearls before Swine*, as he cautioned his Diſciples not to do, for this reaſon, *Leſt they turn again and rend them.* When he thought good to deliver thoſe Doctrines that were likely to exaſperate, as that of the calling of the Gentiles and rejection of the Jews, &c. he choſe to fold them up in Parables, unfolding them in private to his Diſciples, who were fitly diſpoſed for the receiving of them; and therefore had the favour beſtowed upon them *to underſtand the Myſteries of the Kingdom*, as he told them. Mat. 7.

We find that till he knew his time of ſuffering was come, he wiſely ſtill avoided danger (wherein he properly ſhewed

the wisdom of the Serpent) one while by withdrawing himself, as *Matth.* 12. 14. and at other times (as was now said) by concealing those Doctrines, which he was well aware the unbelieving Jews would be so far from embracing, and making good use of, that they would take occasion from them the more industriously to design his Ruine: We read *Joh.* 10. 33. to 36. That he would not expressly owne himself to be the Son of God in any other sense than such a one as he might acknowledge with the least danger; and concealed that which he very certainly knew would but confirm them in their opinion of him as a wicked Blasphemer, and make him so much the more obnoxious to their Spight and Rage. So far was he from running headlong upon sufferings, and making himself through a rash and indiscreet zeal lyable to those that hated him; so far was he from being in love with *Persecution* that he did (as the Apostle exhorted the *Ephesian* Christians to do) ἐξαγοραζόμενοι τὸν καιρὸν *buy out* or *gain time*, because the days were evil and full of danger.

Again, how wisely did our Saviour from time to time *defeat* and render *unsuccessful*, the Plots and Machinations of the *Pharisees* and his other enemies against him!

him! We find in *Matth.* 22. 15. the *Herodians* (or thoſe of the Jews that adhered to the *Cæſarean* and *Roman* Authority) and the *Phariſees* (who eſteemed it as an uſurpation) combining together to intangle him in his talk: And they ſo ordered their plot, as that they might get an advantage from whatſoever he ſhould ſay, either to render him Obnoxious to *Herod*, and the *Roman* Party, or to Inrage the moſt popular and highly eſteemed Sect of the Jews, the *Phariſees*. In order hereunto they cunningly put to him this Queſtion, *viz. Whether it were lawful to pay tribute to Cæſar?* If he ſhould anſwer that it was, he would make himſelf lyable to the latter miſchief; if that it was not, to the former and the far greater. Now (as is to be ſeen in the 19, 20, 21. *verſes*) our Saviour with ſuch admirable *prudence* contrived his anſwer, that (*verſ.* 22.) both factions are ſaid to wonder at it, and to be baffled by it. *When they had heard theſe words, they marvelled and left him and went their way.* Diverſe other Inſtances there are of a like nature; as in *John* 8. 3. to 9. *Matth.* 21. 23. to 27. *Matt.* 22. 41. to 46, &c.

And thus we have ſufficiently and fully enough proved, that it was the whole buſineſs

fineſs of our Saviour's life to make men in all reſpects *Vertuous* and *Holy*; and that thereunto were ſubſervient, as his *Diſcourſes* with them, ſo his *Actions* likewiſe and whole Behaviour. *Plus docent exempla quàm præcepta:* Examples are the moſt natural and eaſie way of teaching, and they are ſo by reaſon of Mankinds being ſo greatly addicted to imitation; and, I ſay, it doth from our paſt diſcourſe ſufficiently appear, That our Saviour's whole Converſation was a rare exemplification of all kinds of Vertue and true Goodneſs.

CHAP. VI.

That to make men truly Virtuous and Holy was the Deſign of Chriſt's unimitable Actions, *or* Mighty works *and* Miracles. *And that theſe did not onely tend to promote it, as they were convincing Arguments that He came forth from God, but were alſo very proper to effect it in a more immediate manner.*

BUt it cannot be amiſs if we moreover adde, That it was not onely the Deſign of our Saviour's *imitable* Actions, to teach the world Vertue, but alſo of thoſe which

which are *not imitable; viz.* Of his *Miracles* and *Mighty works:* And that *these* did not onely tend to the promoting of that Design, as they were convincing and infallible Arguments that he came forth from God, but were likewise very proper to effect it in a more *immediate* manner. For they were not onely *Argumentative* or a proof of the *Truth* of *his Doctrine*, but also *Instructive*, and minded men of their *Duty*. Those Miracles which he chose to work, were of such a nature, as to be hugely fit to accomplish at one and the same time both these businesses. They were not such as the foolish and carnal Jews expected, that is, *signs from Heaven*, that were apt to produce *directly* no other effect than that of pleasing their Childish Phansies, or striking their senses with admiration and astonishment by making prodigious and amazing shews and Representations before their eyes; but most of them were expressions of the greatest *kindness* and *Charity* to Mankind. For instance; his Healing the sick of all manner of Diseases, his making the lame to walk and the blind to see, and the deaf to hear; his cleansing the Lepers, Feeding the Hungry, Raising the Dead, and ejecting of Evil Spirits out of those that were miser-

ably poſſeſſed with them and tormented by them, &c. In *Acts* 10. 38. The Apoſtle expreſſeth our Saviour's working of *Miracles*, by this Phraſe [*Doing good*] who (ſaith he) *went up and down doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed of the Devil.* And in his *Miracles* did he give Inſtances of great kindneſs and good-will even unto thoſe which did leaſt deſerve it: For he made uſe of his *Divine Power* for the Healing & relief of the *Diſingennous* and *Unthankful*, *Ill-natured* and *Wicked*, as well as of the *better-diſpoſed* and *more worthy* perſons: Therein imitating his heavenly Father (as he required us to do) who maketh his Sun to riſe on the *Evil* and on the *Good*, and ſendeth Rain on the *Juſt* and on the *Unjuſt*, *Matth.* 5. 45. And, as I take it, the laſt *Miracle*, that before he aſcended the Croſs was wrought by him, was the Cure of one of thoſe his Enemies that came with Clubs and Staves to apprehend him.

And the few Miracles beſides thoſe that conſiſted in doing *kindneſſes* to Men (for thoſe we have on record are almoſt *all* ſuch) were ſuch as by which he gave us an Example of other Vertues: As particularly of *Piety*, *Truſt in God*, and *zeal for him.* Of his *Piety* and *Truſt in God* his Faſting

Faſting fourty days and fourty nights was a great evidence: It was ſo of his *Truſt* in him and conſtant adhering to him, as by thus doing he put himſelf by his Father's appointment upon moſt violent and ſtrong temptations; in Conflicting wherewith (as hath been ſhewn) he came off a moſt Noble Conquerour. Of his *Zeal* for God was his whipping the Buyers and Sellers out of the Temple no ſmall expreſſion; and I adde, it was ſo alſo of his moſt gracious and loving reſpect to the contemned Gentiles, whoſe Court (as Maſter *Mede* and others have moſt evidently demonſtrated) they were whip'd out of; they making their houſe of Prayer a Den of Thieves, as our Saviour told them. And this may deſervedly be numbered among his Miracles, becauſe it is unconceivable how a Man unarmed, in no Authority, and of mean eſteem in regard of his Parentage, poverty and low Circumſtances, ſhould ſtrike ſuch a fear into thoſe people, as to force them without the leaſt offer of Reſiſtance to flee before him, if the cauſe thereof were not extraordinary and more than natural.

And even that Miracle which might ſeem the moſt inconſiderable, namely his cauſing his Diſciple *Peter* to catch a Fiſh

with a small piece of money in its mouth, was also Instructive of a Duty; It being an Instance of his *Loyalty* to the Supreme Magistrate; for the money was expended in paying Tribute, and taken out of the Sea in that strange manner for no other purpose.

In short, I know no one Miracle that our Saviour wrought, but over and above its being a Seal for the Confirmation of his Divine Mission, it teacheth some one or other good Lesson, and is proper for the bettering of the Souls of those that seriously consider it.

And that great Miracle, which after his Ascension (according to his promise) he shewed in sending the Holy Ghost, did promote the business of making men *holy*, in a far higher way than that of Example: For the grand & standing office of the Spirit in the world, is the exciting in us *Holy Desires*, and the assisting of us in the performance of *Holy Actions*: It is the making the Gospel and all means effectual to the Renovation and Reformation of our Hearts and Lives.

If it be objected that we read of two Miracles, namely, his cursing the Fig-tree, and sending the Devils into the Herd of Swine; which are so far from containing any

any Leſſons of *Morality*, or tending to the leaſt good, that they ſeem to be on the contrary onely of an Evil and Miſchievous Conſequence.

I anſwer, That as for our Saviour's Curſing the *Fig-tree* that bare *leaves*, and had no *fruit* on it, it was a moſt ſignificant document unto Men, that their Profeſſion, which is anſwerable to bearing *Leaves*, muſt be joyned with a ſutable Practice, and have *fruit* accompanying, or 'twill be nothing worth: And *Fruitleſs* Perſons were taught by that Emblem, what they muſt look for, if they continued ſo. But the moſt pregnant meaning of it is (as the Learned Doctor *Hammond* hath ſhewn) that the Jews which were juſt like that Leafie-tree without fruit at that time on it, a meer Profeſſing People, were to expect ſpeedy deſtruction from him, on ſuppoſition that they perſiſted in their unfruitfulneſs. It is not once to be imagined that this which our Saviour did to the *Fig-tree* was any other than *Emblematical*; for no one that deſerveth but the Name of a Man, would be guilty of ſuch a piece of Impotent Revenge, as to wreak his anger on a *Senſeleſs tree*, that was not upon the account of its barrenneſs, or any thing elſe, in a capacity of being faulty or blame wor-

worthy. And beſides it is mentioned in the ſtory as related by S. *Mark*, *Chap.* 11. 13. that *the time of figs was not yet*, Or, it was not then a ſeaſon for Figs; that is, it was not a good Fig-year; which is given as the cauſe of the Tree's being at that time without fruit: And it ſeems to me very probable, that, that clauſe was purpoſely added, that it might be the more eaſily obſerved that our Saviour's Curſe was not deſigned to be terminated in the Tree, but that it was pronounced againſt it onely as it was an apt Reſemblance of a Profeſſor that is *barren* of good works. So that our Bleſſed Lord, who was ſo meek and forbearing towards wicked and the worſt of men, and likewiſe ſo very gracious and kind to them, could not be ſuppoſed to have been at all, much leſs ſo very angry with an innocent Vegetable, as to deſtroy it for no other reaſon than that he once found no fruit upon it; but it is evident that he onely took hold of this opportunity to do as I now ſaid. So that this Miracle was deſigned no leſs than the forementioned to be *Inſtructive* to the ſpectators of it, and to all that ſhould afterwards hear or read the ſtory concerning it; which none could be ſo dull as not to underſtand, that had but the leaſt knowledge of him. And

And as for that other, *viz.* his ſending the Devils, which he had ejected out of a Poor Man, into a Herd of Swine, and by that means cauſing them to run violently down a ſteep hill into the Sea, and to periſh there: We read, Firſt, that our Saviour did not *command* them, but onely *ſuffered* them (as 'tis expreſſed both by S. *Mark* and S. *Luke*) at their own requeſt to take poſſeſſion of thoſe Beaſts. Nor doth the ſaying unto them, *Go*, (which is in S. *Matthew*'s Relation of the Story,) ſpeak any more than a bare Permiſſion; ſeeing their beſeeching him to ſuffer them to go is there expreſſed as the occaſion of his ſo ſpeaking. So that the Miſchief that was done, the *Devils* onely were the Authors or the proper Cauſe of. Nor, ſecondly, could our Saviour *permit* this, either to make *ſport*, or to *pleaſe* himſelf with the *Deſtruction* of the *poor Creatures*; for both theſe were infinitely below him, and perfectly Contrary to the *Seriouſneſs* of his *Spirit*, and *Goodneſs* of his Nature; but there were very weighty and great reaſons why he ſhould thus do.

Mar. 5. 13 Luk. 8. 32

Matth. 8. 31, 32.

As, firſt, To expoſe the Hateful Nature of the Devils, and to give men to underſtand and take notice, how extremely they delight in doing Miſchief; which it doth

doth greatly concern the wellfare of our Souls, both not to be ignorant of, and well to Conſider. By this experiment it appeared, that thoſe unclean Spirits are ſo maliciouſly diſpoſed, and ſo bent upon miſchievouſneſs, as that rather than want objects to vent their Spite on, they will be glad to do it upon Bruit Beaſts. But eſpecially the Devils moſt inveterate and deadly hatred *to man-kind* was hereby ſhewed; in that when they were no longer permitted to do them a greater, they were glad of an opportunity to make them the objects of a leſs miſchief: And to procure to them what hurt they were able in their *Goods*, when they ceaſed to be in a Capacity of tormenting them in their *Minds* and *Bodies*.

2ly, By this means there was a diſcovery made what a *multitude* there were of them that poſſeſſed that *one*, or at moſt (according to S. *Matthew*) *two* perſons; inſomuch as that thoſe which were caſt out of them were enough to actuate the Bodies of a great herd of Swine, and conſiſting of no fewer than about two thouſand, as S. *Mark* ſaith; and none could tell (but he that caſt them out of the men, and ſuffered them to enter the ſwine) how very many each of theſe might be poſſeſſed with. This

was

was of great importance to be known, in order to the underſtanding of the Greatneſs of the Miracle that was wrought in behalf of the Miſerable wretches, and to their being made ſenſible of the exceeding vaſtneſs of the deliverance that by their Saviour was brought unto them. For though the Devils declared that their name was *Legion*, to ſignifie that they were a very mighty multitude; Yet what they ſaid was too incredible to be received upon the bare word of thoſe which from the very beginning were always Liars: but this permiſſion of our Saviour gave a plain demonſtration that in this *ſaying* of theirs they ſpake the truth.

Thirdly, Theſe Perſons were by this means moſt effectually taught how infinitely they were obliged to the Divine Providence, in not ſuffering this huge number of Fiends all the time they had poſſeſſion of them to deſtroy them; when as they no ſooner entred into the herd of Swine, but immediately they diſpatch'd them all.

Fourthly, This permiſſion was alſo a juſt puniſhment to the *Gaderens* to whom thoſe Beaſts belonged; who (as afterward it appeared) were a generation of Covetous Muck-worms, and preferred their

Swine

Swine before their *Souls*; and so likewise it was as effectual and proper a course as could well be taken for their Reformation. Several other Reasons of this action might be instanced in, but these, nay any one of them, may well suffice. So that it is apparent that this Miracle was so far from being a *Mischievous* one or of no use, that there was scarcely any one wrought by our Saviour, that is so pregnant with profitable Instructions, and in so many respects of great importance to the good of our Souls as this is.

CHAP. VII.

That to make men Holy was the Design of Christ's Death, *Proved by several Texts of Scripture: And how it is effectual thereunto, discovered in six Particulars.*

FOurthly, the making of us Holy, as it was the Business of our Saviour's whole *Life*, so was it also the great End and Design of his *Death*. And this are we assured of by abundance of Express Scriptures; Some few of which we will here produce, *Romans* 6. 6. *Knowing this that our*

our Old man is crucified with him, that the Body of Sin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.

2 Corinthians, 5. 15. —— *He dyed for all, that they which live ſhould not henceforth live unto themſelves, but unto him which died for them, and roſe again.*

Galatians, 1. 4. *Who gave himſelf for our Sins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world,* (*viz.* From its corrupt practices) *according to the Will of God and our Father.*

Epheſians, 5. 25, 26, 27. *Husbands love your wives, as Chriſt loved the Church, and gave himſelf for it, that he might ſanctifie and cleanſe it with the waſhing of Water by the word, that he might preſent it unto himſelf a Glorious Church, not having Spot or Wrinkle, or any ſuch thing; but that it ſhould be holy and without blemiſh.*

Coloſſians, 1. 21, 22. *And you that were ſometimes alienated, and enemies in your minds by wicked works, hath he now reconciled in the Body of his fleſh through death, to preſent you holy and unblamable and unreprovable in his ſight.*

Titus, 2. 14. *Who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himſelf a peculiar people zealous of Good Works.*

1 Pet.

1 Pet. 1. 18. *For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed with Corruptible things, as Silver and Gold, from your vain Conversation received by Tradition from your Fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as a Lamb without blemish, and without Spot.*

1 Pet. 3. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for Sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, &c.* That is, saith *Calvin* upon the place, that we might be so consecrated to God as to live and die to him.

1 Pet. 2. 24. *Who his own self bare our Sins in his Own body on the Tree, that we being dead to sins, should live to righteousness; by whose Stripes ye were healed.*

Now the *Death* of Christ is greatly effectual to this end of making us *Holy*, these several ways.

First, As it gave Testimony to the Truth of his Doctrine; which (as hath been shewn) hath no other Design. Christ took his Death upon it that that was true; was willing to expose himself in the Defence thereof to a most ignominious and painful death.

Secondly, As the shedding of his blood was a Federal right confirming the New Covenant, wherein is promised in and through

through Him the Pardon of our Sins, and Eternal happineſs, on Condition of our ſincere Repentance, Faith and new obedience. So the Blood of Chriſt is called the *Blood of the Covenant*, Heb. 10. 29.

And *the Blood of the Everlaſting Covenant*, Heb. 13. 20.

Thirdly, As it is exemplary of the higheſt vertue. 1 *Pet.* 2. 21. *Chriſt alſo ſuffered for us, leaving us an Example, that we ſhould follow his Steps; who did no ſin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he ſuffered, he threatned not, but committed himſelf to him that judgeth righteouſly.* The Greateſt *Humility* and *Self-denial*, the greateſt *Meekneſs*, *Patience* and *Submiſſion to the Divine Will*, the moſt wonderful *Charity*, and *Forgiveneſs of Enemies*, *&c.* are exemplified in our Saviour's Death; and ſo it muſt needs be very highly Effectual towards the promoting of theſe moſt Excellent Graces, and the like, in us, and the expelling and utter extirpating out of us the Contrary Vices.

One would think it impoſſible that he ſhould be of an Haughty Spirit and a *proud* mind, that ſeriouſly Conſiders how the Onely-begotten Son of God humbled

himſelf to the death, even the ſhameful and ignominious death of the Croſs: That he ſhould *Covet* great things in the world, that frequently affects his mind with the thoughts of his Saviour's emptying himſelf and becoming poor, that we through his proverty might be made rich, and preferring the death of the *Vileſt* of wretches before the life of the greateſt and moſt *Honourable* Perſonages. How can he be vain and frothy, that conſiders his Saviour's horrid Agony, what a man of Sorrows he was, and how acquainted with Griefs? How can he ſtorm at the receiving of injuries, and ſwell with indignation againſt thoſe that offer him incivilities and rudely behave themſelves towards him, that fixeth his thoughts upon his Saviour's *meek* putting up the Vileſt and moſt Contemptuous uſages, and conſidereth how gentle, ſedate and Lamb-like he was when Barbarous Villains Mocked, Buffetted and Spit upon him, Crowned him with Thorns, put a Robe in a jear upon his Back, and a Reed for a Scepter into his hand, and at laſt acted the parts of the moſt inhumane Butchers towards him. One would think it no uneaſie matter to perſwade our ſelves to forgive very heartily the Spitefulleſt & moſt malicious enemies, whilſt

whilſt we take notice that Chriſt ſhed even his pretious blood for thoſe that carried in their breaſts the greateſt malignity againſt him and bare him the moſt deadly hatred; that he ſuffered *death* for thoſe which in the Cruelleſt manner they were able took away his *life*. What temptation can be forcible enough to prevail upon us *ſinners* to murmure and repine at the hand of God in the afflictions he inflicts upon us, while we obſerve how much *greater* ſufferings than ours are, were with profoundeſt *Submiſſion* to, and likewiſe the heartieſt approbation of the *Divine Will*, endured by the not onely perfectly *innocent*, but alſo the *highly meriting* and *infinitely Well deſerving* Jeſus?

Fourthly, As the Death of Chriſt was likewiſe a *Sacrifice for ſin*, it was in an Eminent manner effectual to this great purpoſe. In the death of Chriſt conſidered as an *Expiatory* and *Propitiatory Sacrifice*, is the offence that God Almighty hath taken againſt ſin, and the hatred he bears to it, as well as his Love to us ſinners, infinitely declared; in that he would not forgive it to us without the intervention of no meaner an offering than the Blood of his onely-begotten Son. Obſerve what the Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſaith to this Purpoſe,

Rom. 3. 25, 26. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his blood, to declare his Righteouſneſs for the remiſſion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God, to declare I ſay at this time his Righteouſneſs, that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him which believeth in Jeſus.* The Plain ſenſe of which words (as I conceive) is this: That God might at one and the ſame time demonſtrate how *holy* he is, and how much he *hateth ſin* on the one hand, and how infinitely *gracious* he is in his willingneſs to *forgive ſinners* on the other, was Chriſt ſet forth by him to be a Propitiation through Faith in his blood. There are many (and they no Adverſaries to the Doctrine of our Saviour's ſatisfaction) that do not queſtion but that God could have pardoned ſin without any other Satisfaction than the Repentance of the Sinner, (and in the number of them were *Calvin*, *P. Martyr*, *Muſculus*, and *Zanchy*, as might be fully ſhewn out of their ſeveral works, but that this is not a place to do it in) but he choſe to have his Son die for it, before he would admit any terms of Reconciliation, that ſo he might perform the higheſt act of *Grace*, in ſuch a way, as at the ſame time to ſhew alſo the greateſt *diſpleaſure*

ſure againſt *Sin.* And therefore would he thus do, that ſo he might the more effectually prevent wicked mens encouraging themſelves by the conſideration of his great mercy, to perſiſt in their *wickedneſs.* Therefore was Chriſt ſet forth to be a propitiatory Sacrifice for Sin, I will not ſay that his Father (who is perfectly *ſui juris*) might be put by this means into a capacity of forgiving it, but that it might be a Cogent motive, and moſt prevailing Argument to Sinners to reform from it.

There is an excellent place to this purpoſe, *Rom.* 18. 3. *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the fleſh: God ſending his own ſon in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin* (or by the means of ſin) *condemned ſin in the fleſh*; that is, what the Precepts of the *Moſaical* Law could not do, in that they were weak by reaſon of the impetuoſity of mens fleſhly inclinations, that the Son of God (coming in the humane Nature, and in all reſpects becoming like to us, ſin onely excepted) did, and by being a Sacrifice for Sin (ſo the word [*Sin*] ſignifieth in diverſe places, as *Leviticus* 4. 29. *Chap.* 5. 6. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. and, as I ſuppoſe, alſo *Gen.* 4. 7.) Condemned Sin in his fleſh; he by this means ſhewing how hateful it is to

God, took the most effectual course to kill and destroy it. And moreover the most dearly beloved Son of God undergoing such extreme sufferings for our Sins, it is evidently thereby demonstrated what dismal vengeance those have reason to expect that shall continue impenitent, and refuse to be reclaimed from them: For saith he, *Luke* 23. 31. *If they do these things in a green Tree, what shall be done in the dry?* If God spared not his own most innocent, holy and onely Son, than whom nothing was, or could be, more dear to him, but abandoned him to so shameful and horrid a death for our Sins; how great and severe sufferings may we conclude he will inflict upon those Vile Creatures, that dare still to live in *Wilful* disobedience to him.

And from the Death of Christ considered as a Sacrifice we farther learn, what an esteem God hath for his holy Laws, that he would not abate their Rigour, nor remit the punishment due to the Transgressors of them, without a Consideration of no meaner value than the most Pretious blood of his own Son.

And lastly, in that Christ hath laid down his life at the appointment of God the Father for the purpose of making an Atone-

ment

ment of Sin, this gives all men unſpeakably greater aſſurance of the Pardon of True Penitents than the bare Conſideration of the Divine Goodneſs could ever have done: And ſo by this means have we the greateſt encouragement that our hearts can wiſh to become new men and return to obedience; and have all ground of Jealouſly and ſuſpicion removed from us, that we have been guilty of ſuch heinous and ſo often repeated impieties, as that it may not become the Holineſs and Juſtice of God to remit them to us though they ſhould be never ſo ſincerely forſaken by us.

In the *Death* of our Saviour thus conſidered, are contained (as we have ſeen) the ſtrongeſt and moſt irreſiſtible Arguments to a Holy Life; and I farther adde, ſuch as are no leſs apt to work upon the principle of *Ingenuity* that is implanted in our natures, than that of *ſelf-love*. For who that hath the leaſt ſpark of it, will not be powerfully inclined to hate all ſin, when he conſidereth, that it was the Cauſe of ſuch direful ſufferings to ſo incomparably Excellent a perſon, and infinitely obliging a Friend as Chriſt is? Who but a Creature utterly deſtitute of that principle, and therefore worſe than a Brute Beaſt,

can find in his heart to take Pleaſure in the *Spear* that let out the *heart-blood* of his moſt bleſſed Saviour; and to carry himſelf towards that as a loving friend, which was (and ſtill is) the Lord of Glory's worſt enemy?

Again, hath Jeſus Chriſt *indured* & *done* ſo much for our ſakes, and are we able to give our ſelves leave to render all his ſufferings and performances unſucceſsful by continuing in *diſobedience*? Can we be willing that he ſhould do and ſuffer ſo many things in *vain*, and much more do our parts to make him do ſo? Is this poſſible?

Nay hath he been Crucified for us by the wicked *Jews*, and don't we think that enough? but muſt we our ſelves be Crucifying him afreſh by our Sins, and putting him again to an open ſhame by preferring our baſe luſts before him, as the *Jews* did *Baral bas*?

Hath he expreſſed ſuch aſtoniſhing love to us in dying for us, and wo'nt we accept of it? which we certainly refuſe to do ſo long as we live in Sin. Hath he purchaſed Eternal Salvation for us, and ſuch great and glorious things as Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man, to be conceived

ceived by him; and can we perſwade our ſelves to be ſo *ungrateful* to him, as well as ſo *wanting* to *our-ſelves*, as to refuſe to receive theſe at his hands on thoſe moſt reaſonable terms on which he offers them?

Hath he bought us with ſuch a price; and can we refuſe to be his Servants, and rather chuſe to be the ſlaves of Sathan, the Devil's Drudges?

Where can we find ſo many ſtrongly inciting Motives to hate and abandon all ſin, as are contained, and very obvious in the *Death* and ſufferings of our Saviour for it?

Fifthly, The Death of our Saviour is in a ſpecial manner effectual to the making of us in all reſpects vertuous and holy, as he hath thereby procured for us that Grace and Aſſiſtance that is neceſſary to enable us ſo to be. In regard of his humbling himſelf as he did, and becoming obedient to the death of the Croſs, hath God highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name; that at the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhould bow, of things in Heaven, and things in Earth, and things under the Earth: And that every Tongue ſhould Confeſs that Jeſus Chriſt is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,

Phil.

Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11. Now by vertue of the Authority he is by this means inveſted and dignified with, and particularly as he is King of his Church, hath he ſent the Holy Ghoſt to Sanctifie us, to excite us to all holy actions, and to aſſiſt us in the performance of them.

Sixthly, The Death of Chriſt doth alſo apparently promote this great Deſign, as by his patient ſubmitting to it he vindicated God's Right of *Sovereignity* over all his Creatures, and the power he hath to require what he pleaſeth, and to diſpoſe of them as ſeems good to him. Whereas the *Firſt Adam* by Contumacy, Pride and Rebellion did put an high and unſufferable affront upon the Authority of his Maker, and his wretched poſterity followed his Example, and have by that means done what lay in them to render his *Right* to their obedience queſtionable; this Bleſſed *Second Adam* by acting directly Contrary, *viz.* by *Obedience*, *Humility*, & *Subjecting* himſelf to the Divine pleaſure in the ſevereſt expreſſions and ſignifications of it, hath done publiquely and before the world an infinite honour to his Father: And his abſolute Right of Dominion over his whole Creation, and the power he hath to preſcribe to it what laws

laws he judges fitting (which was before ſo eclipſed by wicked ſinners) hath he by this means in the moſt ſignal manner manifeſted and made apparent. And of what force this is to promote our Holineſs and Univerſal obedience, the dulleſt capacity may apprehend.

From what hath been ſaid it appears to be a moſt plain, and unqueſtionable Caſe, that our Saviour in his *Death* conſidered according to each of the notions we have of it, had an eye to the great work of making men *Holy*, and that this was the *main* Deſign which he therein drove at.

And I now adde, that where as it is frequently affirmed in the holy Scriptures, that the End of Chriſt's death was alſo the *Forgiveneſs* of our ſins, & the *Reconciling* of us to his Father, we are not ſo to underſtand thoſe places where this is expreſſed, as if theſe Bleſſings were abſolutely thereby procured for us, or any otherwiſe than upon Condition of our *effectuall believing*, and yielding obedience to his Goſpel. Nor is there any one thing ſcarcely which we are ſo frequently therein minded of, as we are of this. Chriſt died to put us into a Capacity of pardon; the actual removing of our Guilt is not the neceſſary and immediate reſult of his Death, but

ſuſpended

ſuſpended till ſuch time as the forementioned conditions, by the help of his grace, are performed by us.

But moreover, it is in order to our being encouraged to ſincere endeavours to forſake all ſin, and to be univerſally obedient for the time to come, that our Saviour ſhed his blood for the Pardon of it: This was intended in his death as it is ſubſervient to that purpoſe; the aſſurance of having all our ſins forgiven upon our ſincere Reformation, being a neceſſary motive thereunto. Therefore hath he delivered us from a neceſſity of *Dying*, that we might *live* to God; and therefore doth God offer to be in his Son Jeſus reconciled to *us*, that we may thereby be prevailed with to be reconciled to *him*. Therefore was the Death of Chriſt deſigned to procure our Juſtification from all ſins paſt, that we might be by this means provoked to become new Creatures for the time to come. Obſerve to this purpoſe what the Divine Author to the *Hebrews* ſaith, *Chap.* 9. 13, 14. *If the blood of Bulls and Goats, and the Aſhes of an Heifer ſprinkling the Unclean, Sanctifieth to the Purifying of the fleſh: How much more ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himſelf without Spot to God,*

purge

purge your Conſciences from dead works (for what end? it follows) *to Serve* (or in order to your Serving) *the Living God.*

And thus much may ſuffice to be ſpoken concerning the Deſign of our Saviour's Death.

CHAP. VIII.

That it is onely the promoting of the Deſign of making men Holy, that is aimed at by the Apoſtles inſiſting on the Doctrines of Chriſt's Reſurrection, Aſcenſion *and* coming again to Judgement.

I Might in the next place proceed to ſhew, that the *Reſurrection* of our Saviour did carry on the ſame Deſign that his *Precepts*, *Promiſes* and *Threatnings*, *Life* and *Death* aimed at; but who knows not that theſe would all have ſignified nothing to the promoting of this or any other end, if he had always continued in the Grave, and not riſen again as he foretold he would. *If Chriſt be not riſen*, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 15. 13. *then is our preaching vain, and your faith is alſo vain.* So that whatſoever our Saviour intended in thoſe particulars, the perfecting and final

nal accomplishment thereof must needs be eminently designed in his *Resurrection*. The Apostle *Peter* tells his Country-men the Jews, *Acts* 3. 21. that, *To them first God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless them in turning every one of them from his iniquities*. But farthermore we find the Doctrine of *Christ's Resurrection* very much insisted on, by S. *Paul* especially, as a principle of the *Spiritual* and *Divine life* in us; and proposed as that which we ought to have not onely a *Speculative* and *Notional*, but also a *Practical* and *Experimental* acquaintance with. And he often telleth us, that it is our Duty to find that in our Souls which bears an analogy thereunto. He saith, *Phil.* 3. 10. That it was his ambition to know (or feel within himself) the *Power of his Resurrection*, as well as the *fellowship of his sufferings*; to have experience of his being no longer a *dead* but a *living* Jesus by his inlivening him, and quickening his Soul with a new life. And again he saith, *Rom.* 6. 4. that, *Therefore we are buried with him by Baptism unto Death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the Glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life*; that is, Christians being plunged into the Water in Baptism signi-

ſignifieth their undertaking, and obliging themſelves in a ſpiritual ſence to die and be buried with Jeſus Chriſt (which death and burial conſiſt in an utter renouncing and forſaking of all their ſins) that ſo anſwerably to his *Reſurrection*, they may live a Holy and a Godly life. And it followeth, *verſ.* 5. *For if we have been planted together in the likeneſs of his death, we ſhall be alſo in the likeneſs of his Reſurrection*; that is, If we are ingrafted into Chriſt by Mortification to Sin, and ſo imitate his death, we will no leſs have a Reſemblance of his Reſurrection, by living to God, or performing all acts of Piety and Chriſtianity. And then from *verſ.* 8. to 11. he thus proceeds: *Now if we be dead with Chriſt, we believe that we ſhall* (or *we will*) *alſo live with him: Knowing that Chriſt, being raiſed from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto Sin once* (or for ſin once for all) *but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God*, (that is, in heaven with God:) *Likewiſe reckon ye your ſelves to be dead indeed unto ſin, but alive unto God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; that is, after the Example of his *Death* and *Reſurrection* account ye your ſelves obliged to die to Sin, and to live

live to the Praiſe and Glory of God.

And the ſame uſe that the Apoſtle here makes of the *Reſurrection* of our Saviour, he doth alſo elſewhere of his *Aſcenſion* and ſeſſion at the Right hand of God, *Coloſſ.* 3. 1. 2. *If ye then be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the Right Hand of God; ſet your Affections on things above, not on things on the earth: for you are dead* (that is in profeſſion, having engaged your ſelves to renounce your paſt wicked life) *and your life is hid with Chriſt in God, &c.* that is, and the life you have by embracing the Chriſtian Religion obliged your ſelves to lead, is in Heaven where Chriſt is. So that this ſheweth the Informations the Goſpel gives us of theſe things to be intended for *Practical* purpoſes, and Incitements to *Holineſs*. And Chriſt's *Reſurrection* with his following Advancement we are frequently minded of, to teach us this moſt excellent Leſſon, that Obedience, Patience and Humility are the way to Glory; and therefore to encourage us to be followers of Him, to tread in his holy ſteps, and make him our Pattern. This we have in the fore cited place, *Phil.* 2. 5, 6, 7, &c. And *Hebr.* 12. 1, 2. We are exhorted *to lay aſide every weight, and the*

ſin

ſin which doth ſo eaſily beſet us, and to run with patience the race that is ſet before us: looking unto Jeſus the Author and Finiſher of our Faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of the Throne of God. And *verſ.* 3. To *conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf* (that is eſpecially how he is now rewarded for it) *leſt we be weary and faint in our Minds.*

And that the meaning of our being ſo often minded of our Saviour's *coming again* to *Judgement*, is to ſtir us up to all *holineſs* of converſation, who can be ſo ignorant as not to know? For we are ſufficiently told that we muſt be judged according to our *Works*, eſpecially *ſuch works*, as the Hypocrites of this age do moſt deſpiſe & leave to be chiefly performed by their contemned Moraliſts; as appears from *Mat.* 25. 34. to the end of the Chapter. And, Laſtly, that is very certain, which is intimated in the 123 *Page* of the *Free Diſcourſe*, Namely, That all the Doctrines of the Goſpel, as merely ſpeculative as ſome at the firſt ſight may ſeem to be, have a tendency to the promoting of Real righteouſneſs & holineſs, and are revealed for that purpoſe. But as I did not there, ſo neither will I here

proceed to shew it, in all the several instances, or in any more than I have now done: and that for the reason that is there given. But besides I conceive that what hath been discoursed already in this Section, is abundantly sufficient to demonstrate what we have undertaken, *viz.* *That to make men truly vertuous and holy, is the design, the main and onely design of Christianity.*

SECT.

SECT. II.

Upon what accounts the Buſineſs of making men *Holy* came to be preferred by our Saviour before any other thing, and to be principally *deſigned* by him.

CHAP. IX.

Two Accounts of this: The firſt, That this is to do the greateſt good to men. *And that the Bleſſing of making men Holy, is of all other the Greateſt, proved by ſeveral Arguments,* viz. *Firſt, That it containeth in it a Deliverance from the worſt of Evils; and* Sin *ſhewed ſo to be.*

I Proceed in the next place to ſhew how it comes to paſs, that of all other good things, the making Man-kind truly vertuous and Holy, is the *grand* and *ſpecial*

Design of Christianity. There are these two Accounts to be given of it.

First, *This is to do the Greatest Good to Men.*

Secondly, *This is to do the Best Service to God.*

First, The Making of us really Righteous and Holy is the Greatest Good that can possibly be done to us. There is no blessing comparable to that of Purifying our Natures from Corrupt affections, and induing them with Vertuous and Divine qualities. The wiser sort of the Heathens themselves were abundantly satisfied of the truth of this: And therefore the only design they professed to drive at in their Philosophy was *the Purgation, and Perfection of the Humane life. Hierocles* makes this to be the very Definition of it: And by the *purgation* of mens lives, he tells us is to be understood, the Cleansing of them from the dregs and filth of unreasonable appetites; and by their *perfection*, the Recovery of that Excellency which reduceth *to the Divine likeness.* Now the Blessing of making men *Holy*, is of all the greatest,

φιλοσοφία ἐστὶ ζωῆς κάθαρσις, καὶ τελείωσις.

First, Because it contains in it a Deliverance from the *worst of Evils.* Those are

are utterly ignorant of the nature of *Sin*, that imagine any evil greater than it, or ſo great. It was the Doctrine of the *Stoicks* that there is nothing evil but what is *turpe & vitioſum*, vile and vicious. And *Tully* himſelf who profeſſed not to be bound up to the *Placita* of any one Sect of Philoſophers, but to be free-minded and to give his Reaſon its full ſcope and liberty, takes upon him ſometimes moſt ſtiffly and ſeemingly in very good earneſt to maintain it & diſpute for it. But as difficult as I find it to brook that Doctrine as they ſeem to underſtand it, that more modeſt ſaying of his in the firſt book of his *Tuſculan Queſtions* hath without doubt not a little of truth in it. *viz. That there is no evil comparable to that of Sin.* *Hierocles* a ſober Philoſopher, and very free from the high-flown humour and Ranting genius of the *Stoicks*, though he would allow that other things beſides Sin, may be χαλεπὰ καὶ δυσβάστα *very grievous and difficult to be born*, yet he would admit nothing beſides this to be ὄντως κακὰ *truly evil*; and he gives this reaſon for it, *viz.* Becauſe that certain Circumſtances may make other things *good*, that have the repute of *evils*; but none can make *this* ſo. He

Nè malum quidem tantum cum turpitudinis malo comparandum.

ſaith that the word καλῶς [*well*] can never be joyned with any vice, but ſo may it with every thing beſides: As it is proper to ſay concerning ſuch or ſuch a perſon, νοσεῖ καλῶς, πένεται καλῶς he is *well* diſeaſed, he is *well* poor, that is, he is both theſe to good purpoſe, behaving himſelf in his ſickneſs and poverty as he ought to do; but (proceeds he) it can never be ſaid ἀδικεῖ καλῶς, ἀκολαστάινει καλῶς, &c. he doth injury *well*, or he is *rightly* and as becomes him intemperate.

Now that wickedneſs is the greateſt of evils, is apparent, in that it injures mens *better part*, their *Souls*, whereas it lyeth in the power of no other (as the now mentioned Philoſopher alſo obſerveth) ſo to do. Do I ſay, it *injures* them? that's too *gentle* a word, it even *marrs* and *ſpoils* them, as again that perſon doth in another place ſpeak. Other evils may ruine our Bodies, our fortunes, &c. and may, I confeſs, by that means *diſquiet* and *diſturb* our Souls; but they can be *depraved* by nought but *ſin*, this alone can deprive them of the image of God wherein conſiſts their Excellency. And when I ſay that Sin undoes *our Souls* and ſin only, I ſay that this and this *alone*

ταυτὰ, &c. οὐδὲ τῇ ψυχῇ βλαβερὰ τυγκάνει. in Car. Pythag. pag. 105.

φθορὰ δὲ ἀθανάτου πράγματος κακία. pag. 162.

alone undoes *our-ſelves*: For (as ſaith the ſame brave man,) *Thy Soul is thy-ſelf; thy Body thine; and all outward things, thy Body's.* And the Excellent *Simplicius* ſpeaking of *Death*, hath this ſaying, that it is onely τῦ σώματ☉ κακὸν, ὐκ ἡμῶν *an Evil to our Bodies, not to us.* And this both the *Stoicks* and *Platoniſts* do much inſiſt upon, and make great uſe of it. They ſtick not to tell us, that it is improper to ſay that a man conſiſts of two parts, whereof the *Body* is one; and that this is not μέρ☉ συνιτάγμενον, ἀλλ' ὄργανον, a Conſtituent *part* of man, but onely his *inſtrument*: that it is but our *Priſon* wherein we are confined, our *Leather-bag*, our *Satchel*, our *Caſe*, our *Sheath*, our *Houſe*, our *Cloathing*, and the like. And we find ſuch a notion of the *Body* in the Holy Scriptures, as well as in the Heathen Writings. S. *Paul* alſo calls it *our Cloathing, our Earthly houſe, our Tabernacle*, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1, 4. S. *Peter* calleth his *body*, this *Tabernacle*; *I think it meet*, (ſaith he) *ſo long as I am in this Tabernacle*, &c. 2 *Pet.* 1. 13. *Knowing that ſhortly I muſt put off this Tabernacle*, *verſ.* 14. So that *other* evils have that denomination becauſe they are ſo to ſuch things onely (*immediately* I mean) as *belong* to

σὺ γὰρ εἶ ἡ ψυχὴ, τὸ δὲ σῶμα σὸν, τὰ δὲ ἐκτ☉ τῦ σώματος. pag. 153.

our-selves, but *sin* is an *immediate* evil, and the greatest imaginable to our very *selves*; in that in whomsoever it is entertained, it changes the man's nature, spoils his constitution and makes him quite another thing: From a Lovely, Noble and Excellent, it transforms him into an ignoble, base and contemptible Creature. We are not ignorant what names the Scripture bestoweth upon wicked men, even those of the *Uncleanest* and most impure *Beasts*. There is no such filthiness (said *Cicero*) as the *Fœditas Turpificati animi*, that of an unclean Soul: And the Philosophers used to express vice by *Turpitudo* and τὸ αἰσχρὸν *Filthiness*, as being that which is infinitely disbecoming, below and unworthy of humane nature. And the Wise man in his Book of the *Proverbs* saith, that *a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.* There is no such hideous monster in nature as a Reasonable Creature living in Contradiction to the Dictates of his Understanding, trampling under-foot the eternal Laws of Righteousness, and opposing himself to the known will of the Great Sovereign of the World, of him in whom he liveth, moveth and hath his being, to whom alone he is obliged for all he

In lib. 3. de Offi. iis.

τὰ μακὰ ἄισχρα λέγονται, ὡς ἀπ' ἐπῆ καὶ ἀναξία δρᾶσθαι ὑπὸ λογικῆς οὐσίας. Hieroc. pag. 78.

he is or hath, and for the Capacity he is in of having any thing for the future which for the preſent he is deſtitute of. A Body in which the Head and Feet have exchanged places, is not more deformed and monſtrous than is a vitious Soul: For her *Superiour* and *Governing* part is ſubjected to, and Lorded over by her *Inferiour* and that which was deſigned by Nature to be kept in ſubjection and governed. Her ἡγεμονικὸν (as the *Pythagoræans* Phraſe it) or Holder of the Reins, and *Ruling* Faculty, is become the ἡνιοχούμενον the Reined in and *Ruled* Faculty.

I adde moreover, that well may ſin be ſaid to ſpoil and marr mens ſouls, for we read in the writings of the Apoſtles that it *kills* them. *She that liveth in pleaſures is* dead, *while ſhe liveth*, 1 Tim. 5. 6. *You hath he quickened who were* dead *in Treſpaſſes and Sins*, Eph. 2. 1. S. *Jude* ſpeaking of certain ungodly wretches, ſaith, that they are *twice dead*, *v.* 12. And the very ſame notion had diverſe of the Heathens alſo. *Pythagoras* uſed to put a κενοτάφιον or *empty coffin* in the place of that Scholar that left his School, to betake himſelf to a vicious and debauch'd life, as thereby ſignifying, that he was *dead*, dead as to his *nobler* part. And his Followers tell us that

that the Souls of men *died*, when they apostatized from God, and cast off the Divine Life. And such a one, as in whom sin reigneth, may be called a *dead* man, because according to them, the Definition of a *man* belongs not to him, nor doth he any longer deserve the name of a *Reasonable* Creature. The Philosopher we have so often quoted, (and shall have occasion to do it oftener) will have wickedness to be θάνατον λογικῆς ψυχῆς *the death of the reasonable nature:* And *Simplicius* doubts not to assert, that *a man that is drowned in sensuality, hath no more of Reason in him, than a Brute creature.*

μᾶλλον μᾶλλον λογικὸν ἢ ἄλογον ζῶον ὑπάρχον. Comment. in Epict. pag. 4.

To return to *God* and to *a right mind*, to be without *God* and without *understanding*, were of one and the same signification with those excellent men. And our Saviour tells us that the Prodigal *came to himself* when he resolved upon returning to his Father's house; as if that while he persisted in disobedience, he was as very a *Brute*, as were those whose husks he fed on, and had utterly *lost* his *understanding* faculty. Though that last saying of *Simplicius* may seem somewhat hyperbolical, yet this following, one of *Hierocles* hath not the least tittle of a *Figure* in it, *viz.* That wicked men do render the

Reason

Reaſon that remaineth in them ἀνδραπόδου φαυλότερον *more baſe and wretchedly contemptible than the vileſt ſlave.* They uſe it altogether in matters of very *bad*, or (at beſt) of moſt *mean* concern; and therefore as upon that account, it were better, ſo upon this it would be even as well, if they had none at all: For the *Sagacity* that is in Beaſts is not leſs ſerviceable to them, than is the *Reaſon* of a wicked man to him: Nay had he onely that *Sagacity* that is obſervable in many unreaſonable Creatures, it might ſtand him in as much ſtead as his *Reaſon* doth, and perhaps more. So that from what hath been diſcourſed it appeareth very evidently that *wickedneſs* is the *worſt*, *incomparably* the *worſt of Evils*; that it is ſo in its own *nature*, as well as in its *conſequences:* And therefore to deliver us from it, by purifying our lives and natures is to confer upon us the *greateſt* bleſſing, and conſequently is an undertaking, of all others, the moſt worthy of the Son of God.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

The Second Argument, viz. *That the Bleſſing of making men Holy is accompained with all other that are moſt deſireable, and which do beſt deſerve to be ſo called: Particularly with the Pardon of Sin, and God's ſpecial Love. And that thoſe things which Senſual Perſons are moſt deſirous of, are eminently to be found in that bleſſing.*

SEcondly, This is the Greateſt Bleſſing, becauſe it is accompanied with all other that are moſt deſireable, and which do *beſt* deſerve to be ſo called. Where ſin is ſincerely forſaken, it will certainly be *Pardoned*: The *nature* of God is ſuch as that he is ready to be reconciled to a true Convert. They are our iniquities alone that make (or can make) a ſeparation betwixt us and our God, and our *ſins* onely that hide his face from us: But the *cauſe* being removed, the *effect* ceaſeth. When the Divine grace that is offered to ſinners, becometh effectual to the turning any one from his evil ways, God's favour doth naturally return to him: even

as

as naturally as doth the Sun's light into thoſe places, where that which before intercepted between it and them, is taken away. He is of ſo infinitely benign and Gracious a Nature, that no man can continue an object of his diſpleaſure one moment longer than while he is *uncapable* of his favour; and nothing, I ſay, but ſin and wickedneſs (as he hath often enough aſſured us) can make men ſo. Nay a Holy Soul is ever the Object alſo of his Deareſt and moſt ſpecial love. He is not onely *friends* with, but alſo *takes pleaſure* in thoſe that *fear* him, *Pſalm* 147. 11. He is ſaid to make his reſidence within ſuch perſons, ſo great is the delight that he taketh in them. *Iſaiah* 66. 1, 2. *Thus ſaith the Lord, the Heaven is my Throne, and the Earth my Footſtool, where is the houſe that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my Reſt? For all thoſe things have mine hand made, and all thoſe things have been, ſaith the Lord: But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my word.* John 14. 23. *Jeſus ſaid unto him, If any man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* And it is ſaid particularly of him

him that dwelleth in *love* (which is the fulfilling of the Law) that *he dwelleth in God, and God in him.* And I might shew that the Heathens themselves had this very notion. It was a saying used by the *Pythagoræans*; that *God hath not in the whole earth a more familiar place of Residence than a pure Soul.*

ψυχῆς καθαρᾶς τόπον οἰκειότερον ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς θεὸς οὐκ ἔχει.

And *Apollo* is brought in thus speaking,

Εὐσεβέσιν δὲ βροτοῖς γάνυμι τόσον ὅσσον Ὀλύμπου.

To dwell in Heaven doth not more please me, (then
Within the Souls of Pious Mortal men.

And *Hierocles* which reciteth that verse doth himself assert, that *God hateth no man; but as for the good man, he Embraceth him with an extraordinary and surpassing affection.* The Righteous Lord loving *righteousness*, his countenance *cannot* but behold the *upright*. Wheresoever he finds any impressions of True Goodness, as he cannot but highly approve of them, so is it not possible but that they should attract his singular love to those which are the subjects of them: According to that measure

—ὃς μισεῖ μὲν οὐδένα ἄνθρωπον τὸν δὲ ἀγαθὸν διαφερόντως ἀσπάζεται. pag. 70.

ſure and proportion that any one participates of his Goodneſs, he muſt needs have a ſhare in his *Grace* and *kindneſs*. A *holy* perſon is a man *after God's own heart*, as his Servant *David* was ſaid to be: He is a man that carrieth his image, and bears a Reſemblance to him, and upon that account he cannot fail to be very dearly beloved by him. Now I need not go about to prove that there is no bleſſing whatſoever but is implyed in an intereſt in the *Divine Love*, and eſpecially in *ſuch* a love as that which we have ſhewed Good men are made the objects of.

It might be here ſhewn alſo that thoſe things which ſenſual and carnal perſons are moſt deſirous of, *viz. Riches*, *Honours* and *Pleaſures*, are eminently to be found in the Bleſſing we are now diſcourſing of, and indeed thoſe which beſt deſerve to be ſo called and are in the propereſt ſenſe ſo, no where elſe. Nothing inricheth a Man like the Graces of God's Holy Spirit: What S. *Peter* ſaid of *meekneſs*, is true of all the vertues; they are *in the ſight of God* (and he judgeth of things as they are) *of great price*. They are called *Gold tryed in the fire*, *Rev.* 3. 18. The *true* and *our own Riches*, *Luk.* 16. 12. Which is as much as to ſay, that theſe only

1 Pet. 3.

Nihil Neq; meum eſt neq; cujuſquam, quod auferri, quod eripi, quod amitti poteſt. Cicero in Paradoxis.

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are *ours*, and all but these are false and Counterfeit. These inrich our *Souls*, which alone (as was said) deserve to be called *our-selves*, and will abide by us when all other have bid *adieu* to us. These do as much excel in true value and worth all those things which the world calls *Riches*, as do our Immortal Spirits transcend our frail and corruptible Carkasses. It was one of the Maximes of the *Stoicks*, ὅτι μόνος ὁ σοφὸς πλούσιος that *the wise* (whereby they meant the truly virtuous) man is the onely *Rich* man. And *Tully* hath this saying upon it. *A mans Cheft cannot properly be called Rich, but his Mind onely: And though thy Coffer be full, so long as I see thee Empty, I shall not think thee a Rich man.* And saith *Hierocles*, ἃ ἐκτὸς τῆς ψυχῆς, πάντα μικρά· *All things that are without a mans soul, are but little* and insignificant trifles. And *the Righteous*, saith *Solomon*, *is more excellent than his Neighbour*; or he is of greater worth than any other person that is not righteous, *Prov.* 12, 26.

Animus hominis dives, non arca appellari potest. Quamvis illa sit plena, dum te inanem videbo, divitem non putabo. In paradox.

Nothing, again, makes men *so honourable* as doth *Vertue* and True Goodness, or *at all truly* so. Seeing He and He alone that is indued with it, lives up to his high-

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eſt Principle, like a Creature poſſeſſed of a Mind and Reaſon; nay this man is moreover (as was ſaid) like to God himſelf, and imitates his Glorious perfections. And therefore well might Wiſdom ſay as ſhe doth, *Prov.* 8. 18. *Riches and Honour are with me.* To overcome our unruly luſts, and keep in ſubjection all impetuous deſires and inordinate Appetites, makes us more deſervedly Glorious than was *Alexander* or *Julius Cæſar*: For he that thus doth, hath ſubdued thoſe that maſtered thoſe mighty Conquerours. And ſuch a one hath praiſe of God, of the holy Angels, and of all men that are not fools, and whoſe judgments he hath cauſe to value. *He that is ſlow to anger, is better than the Mighty; and he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that taketh a City*, Proverbs 16. 32.

And no *Pleaſures* are comparable to thoſe that immediately reſult from vertue & holineſs: for that man's Conſcience is a very *Heaven* to him that buſieth himſelf in the exerciſe thereof. While we do thus, we act moſt *agreably* to the right frame and conſtitution of our Souls, and conſequently moſt *naturally*; and all the actions of *Nature* are confeſſedly very ſweet and pleaſant. This alſo very many of the Hea-

thens had a great ſenſe of; even thoſe of them which much doubted of another life wherein Vertue is rewarded, commended very highly the Practice of it, for this reaſon, that it is *ſibi præmium* a reward to it ſelf. *Simplicius* in his Comment upon *Epictetus* hath this obſervable ſaying, that, The obſervation of the Rules of Vertue in that Book preſcribed will make men ſo happy and bleſſed even in *this* life, that they ſhall not need μετὰ θάνατον τῆς ἀρετῆς ἀμοιβὰς ἐπαγγέλλεσθαι, &c. *to be promiſed any Reward after death*, though that alſo will be ſure to follow.

Theſe things, I ſay, might be inſiſted on in this place, but they are ſuch large and ſpacious fields of diſcourſe, that ſhould we make any conſiderable entrance into them, we ſhall find it no eaſie matter to get out of them. I therefore proceed.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

The Third Argument, viz. *That whatſoever other Bleſſings a man may be ſuppoſed to have that is utterly deſtitute of Holineſs, they cannot ſtand him in ſo much ſtead, as only to make him not miſerable. And all Evil and Corrupt affections ſhewed to be greatly tormenting in their own nature, and innumerable ſad miſchiefs to be the neceſſary Conſequents of yielding obedience to them.*

THirdly, whatſoever other Bleſſings a man may be ſuppoſed to have, that is utterly deſtitute of this of Holineſs, they cannot ſtand him in ſo much ſtead as but to make him *not miſerable.* We may by the firſt Particular, and what was ſaid upon it, be ſufficiently convinced of the truth of this: But I rather add, That ſinful Luſts are extremely troubleſome, diſquieting, and painful. *The Wicked* (ſaith the Prophet *Iſaiah*) *is like the troubled Sea which cannot reſt, whoſe waters caſt up mire and dirt.* The Labyrinths that Sin involves men in, are innumerable; its ways are ſo full of intricate turnings and wind-

ings, that they ſadly perplex thoſe poor Creatures that walk in them, and it is impoſſible but that they ſhould do ſo. The greateſt *outward* inconveniences and diſaſtrous misfortunes are very frequently (as might be *largly* ſhewn) occaſioned by them, but vexations of mind, and troubleſome thoughts are the conſtant and never failing effects of them. *Tully* in the forementioned Book, ſaith thus to the vitious man, *Thy luſts torment thee, all ſorts of cares oppreſs thee, and both day and night torture thee.* And *Hierocles* ſaith that, *It is neceſſary that the worſt life ſhould be moſt miſerable, and the beſt moſt pleaſant and delightful.* Covetouſneſs and Ambition put mens minds upon the rack to contrive ways of inriching and advancing themſelves: And when they have attained to ſo large a proportion of earthly *profits*, or ſo high a degree of *honour* as they at firſt deſigned, they are *ſo* far from being at *eaſe* and *reſt* (as they vainly promiſed to themſelves they ſhould) that their *cravings* encreaſe as do their *fortunes*, and in the middeſt of their Abundance they continue in the ſame ſtreights that at firſt afflicted them. Nay ſo impetuous is the fury of thoſe luſts, that

Tua libidines te torquent, tu curumnæ premunt omnes, tu dies noctesq; Cruciaris.

——ἐξ ὧν λυπηρότατον ἀνάγκη εἶναι τὸν κάκιστον βίον, τερπνότατον δὲ τὸν ἄριστον.

that they drive them into ſtill greater, and cauſe in *their* Souls that are poſſeſſed by them a more pungent and a quicker ſenſe of want than they felt when their condition was moſt mean, and their eſtate at the loweſt. Nor is this miſchief any other than a moſt natural and unavoidable conſequent of forſaking God (who is, as the Scriptures call him, the *Reſt*, and (as *Plato*) the *center* of Souls) and of ſeeking ſatisfaction in ſuch things, as are infinitely too little for their vaſt capacities: which the forementioned are, and all worldly enjoyments.

What a multitude of Tormenting cares is *Independency* on God and *Diſtruſt* of his Providence perpetually attended with? How impoſſible is it to give a comprehenſive and juſt Catalogue of the many miſchiefs and miſeries that are the neceſſary products and genuine off-ſpring of *Intemperance* and *Laſciviouſneſs*? *Solomon* enumerates ſome of the evils that are the fruits of the *former* of theſe, *Prov.* 23.29 but to give a perfect account of them would be an endleſs work. And as for the *latter*, beſides the loathſome and painful diſeaſe that is ordinarily the conſequent of ſatisfying the cravings of that filthy vice, the *unclean* perſon is continually in a *reſt-*

less Condition, and as it were, in a *constant* fit of a *burning feaver*; and the evil accidents that are occasioned by it are so many, that they are not neither to be reckoned up. The *Epicuræans*, though they placed mans chief happiness in *corporeal* Pleasures, did strictly notwithstanding forbid *Adultery*, for this reason because (as they said) in stead of performing its promise of pleasure, it robs men of it.

He that is *proud* and *highly conceited* of himself, is disordered and discomposed by the least sleighting word, or neglect of Respect, and (I had almost said) by the smallest commendation of his Neighbour too: And it lyeth in the power of any sorry Creature, when he list, to afflict him.

The *Inward* sad effects of *Envy* and *Malice* are sufficiently observable in the *dismal countenances* of those that are under the power of them; and these hateful and deviliſh lusts do eat into and prey upon the very hearts of those in whose breasts they lodge, and are like *Fire* in their bosomes unceſſantly torturing them: Not to say any thing of the many *Outward* and most direful mischiefs that are caused by a full satisfaction of them. In short, there is

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not any one inordinate affection, but is so disturbing and disquieting a thing in its own nature, that it cannot but make those who are in subjection to it, though they should have never so many good things to set against it, exceeding miserable in *this*, as well as in the *other* world. So that had our Saviour come into the world, onely upon such a design as the carnal Jews expected *their Messia* would, *viz.* that of making us partakers of a meer *Temporal* happiness, he must in order to the succeeding of it *chiefly* have concerned himself to make us *holy*.

Qui Appetitus longius evagantur &c. et non satis ratione retinentur, &c. ab iis non modò animi perturbantur, sed etiam Corporis licet ira ipsa cernere iratorum, aut eorum qui aut libidine aliquâ aut metu commoti sunt, aut voluptate nimiâ gestiunt: quorum omnium vultus, voces, motus, status; mutantur. Cicero lib de Officiis primo.

If it were possible (as it hath been shewn it is not) that a wicked man should have *God's Pardon*, this would not make him cease to be Miserable; all it could signifie would be no more than an Exemption from being immediately by him punish'd; But though the Divine Majesty should not in the least afflict him, his very *Lusts* would be of themselves no light punishment, but such as under which he could never enjoy himself in this life, but wil be found to be intolerable in the life to come: Seeing there will *then* be nothing

to be met with that can at all suite with his sensual inclinations, or that will have any aptness in it to please and gratifie them: whereas now all places abound with such things as are fit for that purpose; as are able, I say, to gratifie, though not to satisfie such appetites. So that this man's condition in the *future* state must needs be very exactly like to his, that is even parcht and dried up with excessive thirst, but can by no means obtain wherewithal to quench it; no nor yet so much as a little to slake it, and mitigate the pain of it; as he in this state very frequently makes a shift to do.

Were it possible that *Christ's Righteousness* could be *imputed* to an *unrighteous* man, I dare boldly affirm that it would signifie as little to his happiness, while he continueth so, as would a gorgeous and splendid garment to one that is almost starved with hunger, or that lieth rackt by the torturing diseases of the Stone or Cholick.

And could we suppose such a man to be never so much an object of the Divine *Benevolence*, nay & *Complacency* too (as there is nothing than this latter less supposeable) this could not make him, he continuing wicked, so much as *not miserable*: He being rendered by his wickedness utterly uncapable

pable of ſuch effects of the love of God, as could have upon him ſo good an influence.

Nay farther, were our Phanſies ſo very powerful, as that they could place him even in *Heaven* it ſelf; ſo long as he continueth unturned from his iniquities, we could not imagine him happy *there*; nay he would carry a *Hell* to Heaven with him and keep it there. It is not the being in a *fine place*, that can make any one ceaſe to be miſerable; but the being in a *good ſtate*; and the *place* Heaven without the Heavenly *ſtate*, will ſignifie nothing. An unhealthful and diſeaſed *body* will have never the more eaſe for reſiding in a *Princes* Court, nor will a ſick and unſound ſoul have an end put to its unhappineſs, though it ſhould live for ever in the preſence of *God* himſelf. That ſaying to this purpoſe doth well deſerve our repeating which I find in the excellent book called *The Cauſes of the Decay of Chriſtian Piety*; *Alas, what delight would it be to the Swine to be wrapped in fine linnen, and laid in odours: his ſenſes are not gratified by any ſuch delicacies, nor would he feel any thing beſides the torment, of being withheld from the mire. And as little complacency would a brutiſh ſoul find in thoſe purer and refined pleaſures, which*

which can only upbraid, not satisfie him.

It is not to be doubted that such habits of soul as men carry *hence* with them, they shall keep in the *other* state; and therefore if we leave this earth with any unmortified and reigning lusts, they will not only make us uncapable of the happiness of *Heaven*, but also of *any* happiness. For there will be (as was but now intimated) no satisfaction or so much as *gratification* of *carnal* and *brutish*, and much less of *devilish* appetites in the cœlestial Mansions: and therefore they cannot be otherwise than very grievously painful to the person that is fraught with them; though I say we could suppose him to be safely possessed of those glorious habitations.

To summ up all I shall say on this argument, I fear not to assert, that Omnipotency it self cannot make a wicked person happy, no not so much as *negatively* so (except he should be annihilated) any otherwise than by first giving him his Grace for the subduing and mortification of sin in him: And that to deliver one from all misery while sin is vigorous in his soul, and bears the sway there, is not an object of any power, and implieth in it a palpable and apparent contradiction. For

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misery is no less of the essence of sin and wickedness, than is light of the Sun; so that it is impossible they should ever be separated from one another, but that they must like the Twins of *Hippocrates*, live and die together.

CHAP. XII.

The Fourth Argument, viz. *That Holiness being perfected is Blessedness it self; and the Glory of Heaven consists chiefly in it. This no new notion; some observations by the way from it.*

BUt in the last place, well may we call *Holiness* the *greatest of Blessings*, for when it is *perfected*, it is *Blessedness* it self, and the *Glory of Heaven* is not only entailed upon it, but doth chiefly consist in it. *Beloved* (saith S. *John*) *Now are we the Sons of God; but it doth not appear what we shall be; but this we know that when he appeareth, we shall be like him* &c. As if he should say, I cannot tell you particularly and distinctly what the *blessedness* of the other life will be, but this I am sure of, that *likeness to God* is the *general* notion of it; and that it consists, for the substance thereof

of, in a perfect reſemblance of the Divine Nature. The happineſs of Heaven doth not lie in a mere fixing of our eyes upon the Divine perfections, and in admiring of them, but mainly in ſo beholding and contemplating them, as thereby to be changed into the expreſs and lively image of them: And in having ſo affecting a ſenſe of Gods infinite juſtice and goodneſs, purity and holineſs,, as will make the deepeſt impreſſions of thoſe moſt amiable qualities in our own ſouls.

The Glory that Heaven conferreth upon its inhabitants, conſiſts nothing ſo much in an external view of God and Chriſt, as in a real and plentiful participation of their glorious excellencies, whereby are chiefly to be underſtood thoſe, that are implyed in that general word *Holineſs*: For as for their other attributes ſuch as *Knowledge*, *Power*, &c. the devils themſelves who are moſt of all creatures unlike them, have a large meaſure of them.

This *Bleſſedneſs* principally implyeth a rapturous love of God, a *feeling* as well as *underſtanding* the goodneſs that is in him; an inſeparable conjunction of all the faculties of our ſouls with him, and a perfect aſſimilation of our natures to him. The felicity of Heaven is an operative thing,

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full of life and energy, which advanceth all the power of mens ſouls into a ſympathy with the Divine Nature, and an abſolute compliance with the will of God, and ſo makes him to become all in all to them. So that the happineſs of Heaven, and perfect holineſs, are by no means to be accounted things of a different nature, but two ſeveral conceptions of one and the ſame thing, or rather two expreſſions of one and the ſame conception. *All that happineſs* (as ſaid the Learned and Pious Mr. *John Smith*) *which good men ſhall be made partakers of, as it cannot be born up upon any other foundation than true goodneſs, and a God-like nature within us, ſo neither is it diſtinct from it.*

Neither are we to look upon this as any upſtart or late notion, for our antient Divines have long ſince taught it in this ſaying that was frequently uſed by them, *viz.* Grace is Glory begun, and Glory is Grace perfected.

And I cannot but by the way obſerve that thoſe which have conſidered this, will need no other argument to ſatisfie and convince them, That that talk of ſome [That it is mere ſervile obedience, and below the ingenuity and Generoſity of a Chriſtian Spirit, to ſerve God for Heaven, as well

as for the good things of this life only] is very grossely ignorant, very childish prattle: For, to serve God in hopes of Heaven according to its true notion, is to serve him for himself, and to express the sincerest, and also the most ardent affection to him, as well as concernment for our own souls. And therefore it could do no other than infinitely become the Son of God himself to *endure the Cross, and despise the shame, for the joy that was set before him*, taking that *joy* in no other sence than hath been generally understood, *viz.* for the happiness of Heaven consisting in a full enjoyment and undisturbed possession of the Blessed Deity: nor is there any reason why we should enquire after any *other* signification of that word which may exclude this.

And on the other hand, to be diligent in the service of God for fear of hell, understanding it as a state perfectly opposite to that which we have been describing, is in a like manner from a principle of love to God and true goodness, as well as self-love, and is no more unworthy of a Son of God, than of a mere servant. And thus, the truth of this proposition, *That to make men Holy, is to confer upon them the greatest of blessings*, by the little that hath been said is made plainly apparent.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The Second Account of our Saviour's preferring the buſineſs of making men holy, before any other, viz. That this is to do the beſt ſervice to God. *An objection anſwered againſt the Author's Diſcourſe of the* Deſign of Chriſtianity.

IT remains ſecondly to be ſhewn, *That to promote the buſineſs of Holineſs in the world, is to do God Almighty the beſt ſervice:* And this will be diſpatcht in a very few words. For is it not without diſpute, better ſervice to a Prince to reduce Rebels to their Allegiance, than to procure a pardon under his Seal for them? This is ſo evidently true, that to do this latter, except it be in order to the *former* buſineſs, is not at all to *ſerve* him, nay it is to do him the greateſt of *diſſervices*. I need not apply this to our preſent purpoſe. And therefore to be ſure the work of making men holy and bringing over ſinners to the obedience of his Father, muſt needs have been much more in the eye of our Bleſſed Saviour, than that of delivering them from their deſerved puniſhments, *ſimply* and in it *ſelf* conſidered: For his love to him will

will be (I hope) universally acknowledged to be incomparably greater than it is to *us*, as very great as 'tis.

None can question, but that by our Apostacy from God, we have most highly dishonoured him, we have robbed him of a Right that he can never be willing to let go, *viz.* The obedience that is indispensably due to him as he is our Creator, continual Preserver, our infinitely bountiful Benefactor and absolute Soveraign. And therefore it is as little to be doubted, that Christ would in the *first place* concern himself for the Recovery of that Right. And but that both works are carried on together, and inseparably involved in each other; he must necessarily be very greatly and far more solicitous about the effecting of *this* Design, than of *that* of delivering wicked Rebels from the mischiefs and miseries they have made themselves lyable to, by their disobedience.

So that laying all these considerations together, what in the world can be more indisputable, than that our Savious chief and ultimate design in coming from Heaven to us, and performing and suffering all he did for us, was to turn us from our iniquities, to reduce us to intire and universal obedience, and to make us partakers

kers of inward, real righteousness and true holiness? And we cannot from this last discourse but clearly understand, that it is most infinitely *reasonable*, and absolutely *necessary* that it should be so.

But now if after all this it be objected, that I have defended a notion concerning the *Design of Christianity*, different from that which hath hitherto been constantly received by all Christians, *viz.* That it is to display and magnifie the exceeding riches of God's Grace to fallen mankind in his Son Jesus: I answer that he will be guilty of very great injustice towards me, that shall censure me as labouring in this discourse to propagate any *new* notion: For I have therein endeavoured nothing else but a true explication of the *old* one, it having been grosly misunderstood, and is still by very many to their no small prejudice. Those therefore that say, that the Christian Religion designeth to set forth and glorifie the infinite Grace of God in Jesus Christ to wretched sinners, and withall understand what they say; as they speak most truly, so do they assert the very same thing that I have done. For (as hath been shewn) not only the Grace of God is abundantly displaied and made manifest in the Gospel to sinners for this end, that they may

thereby be effectually moved and perſwaded to forſake their ſins: but alſo the principal Grace that is there exhibited, doth conſiſt in delivering us from the *power* of them. Whoſoever will acknowledge *ſin* to be (as we have proved it is) in its own nature the *greateſt of all evils*, and *holineſs* the *chiefeſt of all bleſſings*, will not find it eaſie to deny this. And beſides (as we have likewiſe ſhewn) men are not capable of God's *pardoning Grace*, till they have truly repented them of all their ſins, that is, have in will and affection ſincerely left them: And alſo that if they were capable of it, ſo long as they continue vile ſlaves to their luſts, that Grace by being beſtowed upon them cannot make them *happy*, nor yet cauſe them to ceaſe from being very *miſerable*, in regard of their diſquieting and tormenting nature, in which is laid the foundation of Hell it ſelf. The free Grace of God is infinitely more magnified, in *renewing* our Natures, than it could be in the bare *juſtification* of our perſons: And to *juſtifie* a wicked man while he continueth ſo, (if it were poſſible for God to do it) would far more diſparage his *Juſtice* and *Holineſs*, than advance his *Grace* and Kindneſs: Eſpecially ſince his *forgiving* ſin would ſignifie ſo little, if it be

not

not accompanied with the deſtruction of it.

In ſhort, then doth God moſt ſignally *glorifie* himſelf in the world, when he moſt of all communicates himſelf, that is, his *Glorious* perfections, to the ſouls of men: And then do they moſt *Glorifie* God, when they moſt partake of them, and are rendered moſt like unto him.

But becauſe nothing is, I perceive, more *generally* miſtaken, than the notion of Gods Glorifying himſelf, I will adde ſomething more for the better underſtanding of this, and I am conſcious to my ſelf that I cannot do it ſo well, as in the words of the Excellent man we a while ſince quoted, Mr. *John Smith* ſometimes Fellow of Queens College in *Cambridge*; *When God ſeeks his* own Glory, *he doth not ſo much endeavour any thing* without himſelf: *He did not bring this ſtately Fabrick of the univerſe into being, that he might for ſuch a monument of his mighty Power, and Beneficence gain ſome* Panegyricks *or Applauſe from a little of that fading breath which he had made. Neither was that Gracious Contrivance of reſtoring lapſed men to himſelf* a plot *to get himſelf ſome External Hallelujahs, as if he had ſo ardently thirſted after the Lauds of Glorified Spirits, or deſired a Quire of Souls to ſing forth his Praiſes: Neither*

See his *ſelect diſcourſes* pag. 409.

was it to let the world see how magnificent he was. No, it is his own internal Glory *that he most loves, and the Communication thereof which he seeks: As* Plato *sometimes speaks of the Divine Love, it ariseth not out of* Indigency, *as created love doth, but out of* Fulness and *Redundancy: It is an overflowing fountain, and that love which descends upon created beings is a free efflux from the Almighty source of love: And it is well-pleasing to him that those creatures which he hath made, should partake of it. Though God cannot seek his own Glory so, as if he*
Chap. 1. 5. *might acquire any addition to himself, yet he may seek it so, as to communicate it out of himself. It was a good Maxime of* Plato, Τῷ Θεῷ οὐδεὶς φθόνος There is no envy in God, *which is better stated by St.* James, God giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not. *And by that* Glory *of his which he loves to impart to his creatures, I understand those stamps and impressions of* Wisdome, Justice, Patience, Mercy, Love, Peace, Joy *and other Divine Gifts which he bestoweth freely upon the minds of men. And thus God triumphs in his* own Glory, *and takes pleasure in the Communication of it.*

I proceed now to consider what *Useful inferences* may be gathered from our past discourse.

SECT.

SECT III.

An Improvement of the whole Discourse in diverse Inferences.

CHAP. XIV.

The First Inference.

That it appears from the past Discourse that our Saviour hath taken the most effectual Course for the purpose of subduing Sin in us, and making us partakers of his Holiness. Where it is particularly shewed that the Gospel gives advantages infinitely above any those the Heathens had, who were privileged with extraordinary helps for the Improvement of themselves. And 1. *That the good Principles that were by natural Light dictated to them, and which reason rightly improved perswaded them to entertain as undoubtedly true, or might have done, are farther confirmed by*

Divine Revelation in the Gospel. 2. That those principles which the Heathens by the highest improvement of their Reason could at best conclude but very probable, the Gospel gives us an undoubted assurance of. This shewed in four instances. 3. Four Doctrines shewed to be delivered in the Gospel, which no man without the assistance of Divine Revelation could ever once have thought of, that contain wonderful inducements, and helps to Holiness. The First of which hath Five more implyed in it.

First, it appears from what hath been said to demonstrate That our Saviour's Grand Design upon us in coming into the world was to subdue sin in us, and restore the image of God, that consisteth in righteousness and true holiness, to us; That he hath taken the most effectual course imaginable for that purpose; and that his Gospel is the most powerful Engine for the battering down of all the strong holds that sin hath raised to it self in the souls of men, and the advancement of us to the highest pitch of Sanctity that is to be arrived at by Humane nature. This (as hath been shewn) was the business that the Philosophy of the Heathens designed to effect

fect; but alas what a weak and ineffeacious thing was it, in compariſon of Chriſt's Goſpel: wherein we have ſuch excellent and ſoul-enobling *Precepts* moſt perſpicuouſly delivered; and moreover ſuch mighty *helps* afforded to enable us, and ſuch infinitely preſſing *motives* and *arguments* to excite us to the practice of them.

And it will not be amiſs if we particularly ſhew, what exceeding great advantages Chriſtians have for the attaining of true Vertue, and the ſublimeſt degrees of it too in this ſtate attainable, above any that were ever vouchſafed to the world by the Divine Providence, before our Saviour's deſcent into it. And (not to make a formal compariſon between the *Chriſtian* and beſt *Pagan-Philoſophy*, this not deſerving upon innumerable accounts to be ſo much as named with that, & much leſs to diſhonour the Religion of our Saviour ſo far as at all to compare it with any of thoſe which were profeſſed by Heatheniſh nations, or that of the impoſtor *Mahomet*, which as well as thoſe, in not a few particulars tends greatly even to *corrupt* and *deprave* mens natures) we will diſcourſe according to our accuſtomed brevity, Firſt, what advantages the Goſpel gives us above thoſe which ſuch Heathens, as were

privileged with extraordinary helps for the improvement of their understandings, had; and Secondly, above those which God's most peculiar people, the children of *Israel*, were favoured with.

First, as for those the Gospel containeth above such as the best and most refined Heathens enjoyed, it will be worth our while to consider

First, *That the good principles that were by natural light dictated to them, and which reason rightly improved did perswade them to entertain as undoubtedly true, or might have done, are farther confirmed by Divine Revelation in the Gospel to us.*

As, *That there is but one God, That he is an absolutely-perfect Being, infinitely Powerful, Wise, Just, Merciful,* &c. *That we owe our lives and all the comforts of them to him, That he is our Sovereign Lord, to whom absolute subjection is indispensably due, That he is to be loved above all things; and the main and most important particular duties which it becomes us to perform to him, our neighbour and selves.* We Christians have these things as plainly declared from Heaven to us, and as often repeated and inculcated, as if there were no other way to come to the Knowledge of them but that of *Revelation.* So that (as hath been

been ſhewn in the *Free Diſcourſe, pag.*88.) what the Heathens took pains for, and by the exerciſe of their Reaſon learnt, we have ſet before our eyes, and need but read it in order to our knowledge of it. It is true, for our ſatisfaction whether the Holy Scriptures are Divinely inſpired, and have God for their Author, it is neceſſary that we employ our Reaſon, except we can be contented to be of ſo very haſty and eaſie a belief as to give credit to things, and thoſe of greateſt concernment too, we know not why; or to pin our faith on our Fore-fathers ſleeves; and ſo to have no better bottome for our belief of the *Bible*, than the *Turks* have for theirs of the *Alcoran*. But although it is neceſſary that we ſhould exerciſe here our Diſcurſive Faculty, if we will believe as becomes Creatures indued with Reaſon, yet this is no tedious task, nor ſuch as we need much belabour our brains about. An unprejudiced perſon will ſoon be abundantly ſatisfied concerning the Scripture's Divine Authority, when he doth but conſider how it is confirmed, and how worthy the Doctrine contained in it is of him whoſe name it bears. Now, I ſay, this little pains being taken for the eſtabliſhment of our Faith in the Holy Scripure,

Scripture, we cannot but be at the first sight assured of the truth of the contents of it. For no man in his wits can in the least question the Veracity of him, whom even *natural* light assures us can be no other than Truth it self.

Secondly, *Those good Principles that the Heathens by the greatest improvement of their Reason could at best conclude but very probable, are made undoubtedly Certain to us Christians by Revelation*; As,

First, *That of the Immortality of our Souls.* The vulgar sort of Heathens who were apt to believe any thing that was by Tradition handed down to them, ('tis confessed) did not seem to doubt of the truth of this Doctrine, but to take it for granted; which (no question) is also to be imputed to the special Providence of God, and not merely to their Credulity. But the more learned and sagacious, that would not easily be imposed on, nor believe any farther than they saw cause, though by Arguments drawn from the notions they had truly conceived of the Nature of Humane Souls they have diverse of them undertaken to prove them *Immortal*; yet could their Arguments raise the *best* of them no higher than a *great* opinion of their Immortality. *Cato* read *Plato*

of

of the Immortality of the Soul, as he lay bleeding to death, with great delight; but that argues not that he had any more than great *hopes* of the truth of it. *Socrates* did ſo believe it, that he parted with *this* life in expectation of *another*; but yet he plainly and ingenuouſly confeſſed to his friends, that it was not *certain*. *Cicero*, that ſometimes expreſſeth great confidence concerning the truth of it, doth for the moſt part ſpeak ſo of it, that any one may ſee that he thought the Doctrine no better than probable. He diſcourſeth of it in his book *de Senectute* as that which he rather could not endure to think might be falſe, than as that which he had no doubt of the truth of. And after he had there inſtanced in ſeveral Arguments which he thought had weight in them for the proof thereof, and expreſſed a longing to ſee his Anceſtors, and the brave men he had once known, and which he had heard of, read and written of, he thus concludes that whole Diſcourſe, *If I erre in believing the Souls immortality, I erre willingly; neither ſo long as I live will I ſuffer this errour which ſo much delights me, to be wreſted from me. But if when I am dead, I ſhall be void of all ſenſe, as certain*

Quòd ſi in hoc erro, quòd animos hominum immortales eſſe credam, libenter erro: nec mihi errorem, quo delector, dum vivo, extorqueri volo. Sin mortuus, &c.

little

little Philosophers think, I do not fear to have this errour of mine laught at by dead Philosophers.

But now the Gospel hath given us the highest assurance possible of the truth of this Doctrine; *Life and immortality* are said *to be brought to light* by it: He who declared himself to be the Son of God with power, gave men a *sensible* demonstration of it in his own person, by his Resurrection from the Dead, and Ascention into Heaven: And both by himself, and his Apostles (who were also indued with a power of working the greatest of Miracles for the confirmation of the truth of what they said) did very frequently, and most plainly preach it.

Secondly, *The Doctrine of Rewards and Punishments in the life to come* (which is for substance the same with the former) *according to our behaviour in this life*, the learned Heathens did generally declare their belief of; which they grounded upon the Justice, Holiness and Goodness of the Divine Nature. They considered that Good men were often exercised with great calamities, and that bad men very frequently were greatly prosperous, and abounded with all earthly felicities: And therefore thought it very reasonable

to

to believe that God would in another life ſhew his hatred of Sin, and love of Goodneſs, by making a plain diſcrimination between the conditions of vertuous and wicked perſons, by puniſhing theſe, and rewarding thoſe without exception. But this, though it was, in their opinion, a very *probable* argument, yet they looked not on it as that which amounted to a *Demonſtration.* For they could not but be aware, That that Doctrine which was ſo generally received by them, *viz.* That Vertue is in all conditions a Reward, and Vice a Puniſhment to it ſelf, did very much blunt the edge of it: And that other very harſh one, That all things beſides Vertue and Vice are ἀδιάφορα neither good nor evil, did render it (as the perfect *Stoicks* did ſeem too well to underſtand) too too inſignificant. But I muſt confeſs that *Hierocles*, who (as hath been ſaid) did not admit that notion, but in a very qualified ſence, ſaith of thoſe that think their Souls mortal (and conſequently that vertue will hereafter have no reward) that when they diſpute in the behalf of vertue, κομψίνονται μᾶλλον, ἢ ἀληθεύουσιν *they rather talk wittily, than truly and in good earneſt.* The excellent *Socrates* himſelf, when he was going to drink off the fatal

fatal drug, thus said to those that were then present with him, I am now going to end my days, whereas your lives will be prolonged; but whether you or I upon this account are the more happy, is known to none but God only: intimating that he did not look upon it as *absolutely certain* that he should have any Reward in another world, for doing so heroically vertuous an act, as chusing Martyrdom for the Doctrine of the Unity of the Godhead. But now, what is more frequently or clearly declared in the Gospel, than that there will be Rewards and Punishments in the world to come sutable to mens actions in this world? than, that Christ will come a second time to judge the world in righteousness, and that *all must appear before his Judgment-seat, to receive according to what they have done, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,* 2 *Cor.* 5. 10.

Thirdly, *That mens sins shall be forgiven upon true Repentance*, from the consideration of the Goodness and Mercy of God, the Heathens were likewise perswaded, or rather hoped: But we Christians have the strongest assurance imaginable given us of it, by the most solemn and often reiterated promises of God himself; and not onely that

that ſome or moſt, but alſo that all without exception, and the moſt heinous impieties upon condition of their being ſincerely forſaken, ſhall in and through Chriſt be freely forgiven to thoſe that have been guilty of them.

Fourthly, *The Doctrine of God's readineſs to aſſiſt men by his ſpecial grace in their endeavours after Vertue*, could be no more, at the *beſt*, than probable in the judgement of the Heathens: but we have in the Goſpel the moſt expreſs promiſes thereof made to us, for our infinitely great encouragement. *Tully* in his Book *de Naturâ Deorum* ſaith, that their City *Rome*, and *Greece* had brought forth many ſingular men, of which it is to be believed none arrived to ſuch a height *niſi Deo juvante*, but by the help of God. And after he tells us, that *Nemo vir magnus ſine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit*, No excellent man was ever made ſo but by ſome Divine affliation. And *Pythagoras* in his golden verſes exhorts men to pray unto God for aſſiſtance in doing what becomes them.

—— ἀλλ' ἔρχεο ἐπ' ἔργον
Θεῶσιν ἐπευξάμενος τελέσαι.

And

And *Hierocles* (with whom I confess my self so enamoured, that I can scarcely ever forbear to present my Reader with his excellent sayings, when there is occasion) He, I say, upon this clause of *Pythagoras*, hath a discourse, concerning the necessity, of our endeavours after Vertue on the one hand, and of the divine blessing to make them successful on the other, which I have often admired. And even *Seneca* himself, very unlike a *Stoick*, saith, *Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est, &c.* No man can be made good without God, for can any one raise up himself without his help?

But none of these could have the least *assurance*, that God would not deny his special assistance to any that seriously seek after it, especially since men have brought themselves into a state of imbecillity and great impotence through their own default. But this, I say, the Gospel gives all men very serious offers of, and assures them if they be not wanting to themselves, they shall obtain. Hence our Saviour saith, *Ask, and it shall be given unto you: seek and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh, receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any that is a father,*

will

will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a Serpent? or if he ask an egge, will he offer him a Scorpion? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit unto them that ask him, Luke 11. 9, *&c.* And the same thing is told us by S. *James* in these words *chap.* 1. 5. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him. Antoninus* the Philosopher puts men upon praying for a good mind above all things, but all the encouragement *he* could give was, καὶ θεώρει τί γίνεται *and see what will come of it.* *Lib.* 9. *Sect.* 40.

Thirdly, We have other Doctrines made known to us by the Gospel, which no man could ever without Divine Revelation in the least have *dream'd* of. As,

First, *That God hath made miserable sinners the objects of such transcendent kindness, as to give them his onely-begotten Son.* And there are these five Doctrines implied in this, which are each of them very strong motives and incentives to Holiness, *viz.*

1. That God Almighty hath made such account of us, and so concerned himself for our recovery out of that most wretch-

ed condition we had by ſinning againſt him plunged our ſelves into, as to ſend his own Son from Heaven to us to ſhew us on what terms we may be recovered, and alſo in his name even to *pray* and *beſeech* us to comply with them. That he ſhould ſend no meaner a perſon than one who was the *Brightneſs of his Glory, and the expreſs image of his Perſon, by whom alſo he made the world*, upon this errand, is ſuch a motive to holineſs as one would think no ſinner could be able to ſtand out againſt. That God ſhould ſend an Embaſſadour from Heaven to us to aſſure us that he is Reconcileable, and bears us good-will, notwithſtanding our high provocations of him, and to lay before us all the parts of that holineſs which is neceſſary to reſtore our Natures to his own likeneſs, and ſo to make us capable of enjoying Bleſſedneſs; and moſt pathetically moreover to entreat us to do what lieth in us to put them in practice, that ſo it may be to eternity well with us; and that this Embaſſadour ſhould be ſuch a one alſo as we now ſaid, never was there ſo marvelous an expreſſion of the Divine Love; and therefore one would even *conclude* it perfectly irreſiſtible by all perſons that have not extirpated out of their natures all ingenuity.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

Heb. 1. 2, 3

2. That

2. That this Son of God converſed upon equal terms with men, and was incarnate for their ſakes. *Great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs, God manifeſted in the Fleſh.* 1 Tim. 3.16. That he ſhould become the Son of Man, ſubmit to be born of a Woman, is a Demonſtration that God is ſo far from having caſt off Humane Nature, that (as much as it is depraved) he beareth a very wonderful good-will ſtill to it, and hath a real deſire to readvance and dignifie it: even this ſimply conſidered and without joyning with it the conſideration of the *Deſign* of it, might make us conclude this; ſeeing that Chriſt's taking *our* nature is the bringing of it ſo near to the *Divine*, as to lodge it therewith in one and the ſelf-ſame Perſon. And therefore, beſides the motive to holineſs drawn from God's infinite *love* therein expreſſed, this Doctrine containeth another very powerful one, *viz.* That it muſt needs be a moſt notoriouſly vile thing to diſhonour our nature by ſin and wickedneſs, and far more ſo than it was before the Incarnation of Jeſus Chriſt; in that it may now by the means thereof be properly ſaid, that it is in his perſon advanced above even the Nature of *Angels*; for him who is inveſted with it do they themſelves worſhip. And how can any

Chriſtian while he conſidereth this, be able to forbear thus to reaſon with himſelf? Shall I by harbouring filthy luſts debaſe that nature in my *own* perſon, which God hath to ſuch an infinite height exalted in his *Son's*? God forbid. What an additional motive is this, to do as *Pythagoras* adviſed his Scholars, in theſe words, *Above all things revere and ſtand in awe of thy ſelf.* Do nothing that is diſbecoming and unworthy of ſo excellent a nature, as thine is.

πάντων δὲ μάλιστ' αἰσχύνου σεαυτόν.

3. That this Son of God taught men their duty by his own example, and did himſelf perform among them what he required of them. Now that he ſhould tread before us every ſtep of that way, which he he hath told us leadeth to eternal happineſs, and commend thoſe duties which are moſt ungrateful to our corrupt inclinations, by his own practice; our having ſo brave an example is no ſmall encouragement to a chearful performance of all that is commanded. For how honourable a thing muſt it needs be to imitate the onely begotten Son of God, nay and one who is likewiſe God himſelf? How glorious to follow ſuch a pattern? Thoſe which have any thing in their ſouls of true generoſity, cannot but find themſelves by the conſideration

deration hereof, not a little provoked to abandon all ſin, and to ſet themſelves very heartily to the performance of whatſoever duties are impoſed upon them. And as for *thoſe* which we are ſo apt to look upon as unworthy of us, and too low for us (ſuch as meek putting up of affronts, and condeſcending to the meaneſt offices for the ſerving of our brethren) how can *his* ſpirit be too lofty for them, that conſiders *Chriſt's* was not. Now theſe are all ſuch motives and helps to holineſs, the like to which none but thoſe who have the Goſpel, ever had.

4. That this Son of God was an expiatory Sacrifice for us. We have already ſhewn what cogent Arguments to all holy obedience are herein contained.

5. That this Son of God being raiſed from the Dead, and aſcended into Heaven is our High Prieſt there, and *ever lives* (as the Author to the * Hebrews ſaith) *to make interceſſion* with his Father *for us*. The Heathens, it is confeſſed, had a notion of *Dæmons* negotiating the affairs of men with the Supreme God; but they could never have imagined in the leaſt that they ſhould be ſo highly privileged, as to have one who is the Begotten Son of this God, and infinitely above all perſons * Chap. 7.

dear to him, for their perpetual Mediator and Interceſſor. I need not ſay what an encouragement this is to an Holy Life.

And as the Doctrine of God's giving his Son, which containeth the five forementioned particulars, is ſuch as the higheſt improvement of reaſon could never have cauſed any thing like it to have entered our thoughts, or that is comparable thereunto for the effectual provoking of men to the purſuance of all Holineſs of Heart and Life, ſo

Secondly, *The Doctrine of his ſending the Holy Ghoſt, to move and excite us to our Duty, and to aſſiſt, chear, and comfort us in the performance of it*, may go along with it. How could it have once been thought, without Divine Revelation, that a perſon indued with the Divine Nature, and Infinite Power and Goodneſs ſhould take it upon him as his Office and peculiar Province to aſſiſt mens weakneſs in the proſecution of vertue? But this doth the Goſpel aſſure us of; as alſo that thoſe which do not reſiſt and repel his good motions ſhall be ſure to have alwaies the ſuperintendency of this Bleſſed Spirit, and that he will never forſake them, but abide with them for ever, and carry them from one degree of Grace to another, till at length

length it is consummate and made perfect in Glory. And to this I adde

Thirdly, *The Doctrine of our Union with Christ through this Spirit:* which Union (to speak in the words of the Learned Dr. *Patrick* in his *Mensa Mystica*) *Is not only such a Moral one as is between Husband and Wife, which is made by Love; or between King and Subjects, which is made by Laws; but such a Natural Union as is between Head and Members, the Vine and Branches which is made by one Spirit or Life dwelling in the whole.* The Apostle saith 1 *Cor.* 12.12, 13. *As the body is one and hath many members; and also the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ; for by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body.* Now see what use the Apostle makes of both these 1 Cor. 6. 15, 19, 20. *Know you not that your bodies are the members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an Harlot?* God forbid. And then he thus proceeds in the 19 and 20 Verses, *What, know you not that your body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price: Therefore glorifie God in your body and in your Spirit, which are God's.* What

helps and incitements we have to the perfecting of Holineſs in the fear of God, from theſe *two Doctrines, is inexpreſſible.*

Laſtly, *The Doctrine of the unconceivably great Reward, that ſhall be conferred upon all good and holy perſons, which the Goſpel hath revealed,* is ſuch as could not poſſibly by the mere help of Natural Light enter into the thoughts of thoſe that were ſtrangers to it. We are therein aſſured not only of another life, and that good men ſhall therein be rewarded, but likewiſe that the reward that ſhall be conferred upon them, ſhall be no leſs than an *Hyperbolically Hyperbolical Weight of Glory:* as are the words of S. *Paul* 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. Thoſe that *overcome,* are promiſed that *they ſhall ſit with Chriſt on his Throne, even as he overcame and is ſet down with his Father on his Throne,* Rev. 3. 21. In ſhort, the happineſs that our Saviour will reward all his faithful Diſciples with, is ſo expreſſed, as that we are aſſured it is inexpreſſible, and likewiſe far exceeding the ſhort reach of our preſent conceptions: of which their *ſouls* are not only to partake, but their *bodies* alſo, they being to be made (as *vile* as they are in this ſtate) *like the Glorious Body* of Jeſus Chriſt, and though ſown in *Corruption* and *diſhonour* to be raiſed in *Glory,* 1 *Cor.* 15. Now

Phil. 3. 21.

Now though, as we ſaid, the learned Heathens did many of them by the exerciſe of their reaſon make it probable to themſelves that their ſouls were immortal, and that in another world vertuous perſons ſhall be richly rewarded; yet no reaſoning of theirs could ever enable them ſo much as to conjecture that this reward ſhall be ſuch an *immenſely* great one, as *that* the Goſpel aſſures us of: there being an infinite diſproportion betwixt the beſt ſervices that the moſt vertuous perſons are in a poſſibility of performing, and ſuch a reward as this is: and it being alſo impoſſible that ſo great a felicity as that of the *Soul* only, ſhould be a neceſſary and natural reſult from the higheſt degrees of holineſs that are attainable in this low and imperfect ſtate. But yet it is too well known to be concealed that the *Pythagoræans* and *Platoniſts* do ſpeak very great things of the happineſs of Heaven; and thoſe of them that diſcourſe intelligibly concerning it, do give *in the general* the Goſpel-notion of it. I have found *Simplicius* ſomewhere in his Comment on *Epictetus* calling it an *eternal reſt with God*. And the *Pythagoræan* verſes conclude with theſe two

H

Ἢν δ' ἀπολείψας σῶμα ἐς αἰθέρ' ἐλεύθερον ἔλθῃς,
Ἔσεαι ἀθάνατος Θεὸς, ἄμβροτος, οὐκ ἔτι θνητός.

When from this body thou'rt set free,
Thou shalt mount up toth' Sky:
And an immortal God shalt be,
Nor any more shalt die.

Where by [*Thou shalt be an immortal God*] the Commentator *Hierocles* understands, thou shalt be like to the immortal Gods, and by them he meaneth, as appears by his Comment upon the first verse, those excellent spirits that are immediately subordinate to their Maker the supreme God, and *the God of Gods*, as he calls him; by which he seemeth to understand the same with those called in the Scripture *Arch-Angels*; for I find that he gives the name *Angels* to an order next below them. So that, according to him, it was the *Pythagoræan* doctrine, That good men shall, when they go to Heaven, be made in state and condition like to those that are likest to God Almighty. But how they should learn this by mere natural Light, is unimaginable. That which is most probably conjectured is, that they received these with several other

ther notions from the antient traditions of the *Hebrews*. But as for their σῶμα αὐγοειδὲς, and ὄχημα πνευματικὸν *the ſplendid body*, and *ſpiritual vehicle* they talk of, they mean not that Glorious *Cæleſtial* body, which the Apoſtle tells us this *Terreſtial* one ſhall be changed into, but, a thin ſubtile body, which they ſay the ſoul even while it is in this groſs one is immediately incloſed in: And which being in this life well purified from the pollution it hath contracted from its Caſe of fleſh, the ſoul taking its flight from thence with it, enjoyeth its happineſs in it. But, I ſay, the change of this *vile* into a *Glorious* body they were perfectly ſtrangers to.

This notion of a fine body did *Tertullian* retain his belief of, after he was converted to Chriſtianity, and took it for the *inner man*, ſpoken of in Scripture.

Now what an unſpeakable encouragement to *Holineſs* is the happineſs which the Goſpel propoſeth to us, and gives us *aſſurance* of alſo, that the now mentioned or any of the Philoſophers could never by the beſt improvement of their Intellectuals have conceived to be ſo much as likely to be attainable by mankind? And who would ſtill ſerve their filthy luſts, and in ſo doing be the vileſt of ſlaves here, that looks to reign with the King of the world for ever hereafter? *He that hath this hope in him*, ſaith S. *John*, *purifieth himſelf even as he is pure.* 1 *John* 3. 3.

And

And what hath been ſpoken of the greatneſs of the *Reward* which is promiſed in the Goſpel to obedient perſons, may be ſaid alſo of the *puniſhment* it threateneth to the diſobedient. It would make (one would think) even an heart of Oak, and the moſt hardened ſinner to tremble and ſhake at the reading of thoſe expreſſions it is ſet forth by. Some of the Philoſophers do ſpeak very dreadful things concerning the condition of wicked men in the other world; but they fall extremely ſhort of what the Goſpel hath declared. But I confeſs a diſcourſe on this head will not very properly come in here. For mere reaſon might make it exceedingly probable that ſo highly aggravated ſins as thoſe which are committed againſt the Goſpel are, ſhall be puniſh'd as ſeverely, if impenitently perſiſted in, as is declared by our Saviour and his Apoſtles they ſhall be. But however it is no ſmall awakening to us Chriſtians, that we have ſuch an undoubted aſſurance from God himſelf, what we muſt expect, if we will not be prevailed upon by all the means afforded us for our reformation, but ſhall notwithſtanding them perſevere in the neglect of known duties, and in the allowance of known wickedneſs.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

That the Goſpel containeth incomparably greater helps for the effecting of the deſign of making men inwardly righteous and truly holy, than God's moſt peculiar people, the Iſraelites, *were favoured with. Where it is ſhewed.* 1. *That the Goſpel is infinitely more effectual for this purpoſe than the* Moſaical *Law was.* 2. *And that upon no other accounts the* Jewes *were in circumſtances for the obtaining of a thorow reformation of life and purification of nature, comparable to thoſe our Saviour hath bleſſed his Diſciples with.*

IN the ſecond place, it is the cleareſt caſe *That the Goſpel of our Saviour containeth incomparably greater helps and advantages for the effecting of the great work of making men really righteous and truly holy, than God's moſt peculiar people, the* Iſraelites, *whom he knew and favoured above all the nations of the earth, were partakers of.*

Firſt, Nothing is plainer than that the Goſpel is infinitely more effectual for this purpoſe, than the *Moſaical* Law was. For indeed

indeed that was *directly* designed only to restrain those that were under the obligation of it from the more *notorious* sins. *It was added* (saith the Apostle) *because of Transgression, till the Seed should come* &c. Gal. 3. 19. *Justin Martyr* saith particularly of the *Sacrifices*, that the end of them was to keep the Jews from worshipping Idols, which *Trypho* also, though a Jew that greatly gloried in the Law, acknowledged. They were an extremely carnal and vain people, exceedingly prone to be bewitched with the Superstitions of the Gentiles; God gave them therefore a pompous way of worship that might gratifie their childish humour, and so keep them from being drawn away with the vanities of the Heathens among whom they dwelt: and he gave them, withall, such *Precepts* inforced with threatnings of most severe and present punishments, as might by main force hold them in from those vile disorders, immoralities and exorbitances that had then overspread the face of the woefully depraved&corrupted world. It is certain that the Law of *Moses*, strictly so called, did *properly* tend to make them no more than externally righteous; and whosoever was so, and did those works it enjoined (which they might do by

by their own natural strength) was esteemed according to that Law and dealt with as just and blameless; and had a right to the immunities and privileges therein promised. But much less was it accompanied with grace to indue the observers of it with an inward principle of Holiness..

And the Apostle S. *Paul* expresseth this as the great difference between that *Law* and the *Gospel*, in calling *this* the *Spirit*, and *that* the *Letter*, as he several times doth. Not that God, who was ever of an infinitely benign nature, and *love* it self (as S. *John* describes him) was wanting with his Grace to well-minded men under the Old-Testament; or that the Jews were all destitute of an inward principle of Holiness; nothing less: But the Law which *Moses* was peculiarly the promulger of, did not contain any promises of Grace, nor did the obligation thereof extend any farther than to the outward man. But there ran (as I may so express my self) a vein of Gospel all along with this Law, which was contained in the Covenant made with *Abraham* and his Seed, by virtue of which the good men among the Jews expected Justification and eternal Salvation, and performed the sub-

stance

ſtance of thoſe Duties which the New Teſtament requireth, and which were both by *Moſes* and the Prophets, at certain times, and upon ſeveral occaſions urged upon them.

But as for this Law of *Moſes* conſidered according to its *natural* meaning, it is called *a Law of a carnal Commandment*, Heb. 7. 16. And the ſervices it impoſed, *weak and beggerly Elements*, Gal. 4. 9. And a *Law which made no man perfect*, Heb. 7. 19. Its promiſes therefore were only *temporal*; upon which account the Author to the Hebrews ſaith, that the Goſpel is eſtabliſhed *on better promiſes*. Nor was Juſtification before God obtainable by it, as S. *Paul* frequently ſheweth; and therefore did account the righteouſneſs of it very mean and vile in compariſon of that which the Goſpel indued men with. No man could be acquitted by the ſevereſt obſervance of this Law from any other than *Civil* puniſhments, nor were its *Sacrifices* able to make the offerers *perfect as pertaining to the conſcience*, Heb. 9. 9. And though it be true (as Mr. *Chillingworth* obſerveth in his Sermon on *Gal.* 5. 5.) *That the legal Sacrifices were very apt and commodious to ſhadow forth the oblation and ſatisfaction of Chriſt; yet this uſe of them*

was

was ſo myſtical and reſerved, ſo impoſſible to be collected out of the letter of the Law; that without a ſpecial Revelation from God, the eyes of the Iſraelites were too weak to ſerve them to pierce through thoſe dark clouds and ſhadows, and to carry their obſervation to the ſubſtance. So that (proceeds he) *I conceive thoſe Sacrifices of the Law in this reſpect are a great deal more beneficial to us Chriſtians: For there is a great difference between Sacraments and Types: Types are onely uſeful after the Antitype is diſcovered, for the confirmation of their faith that follow. As for Example,* Abraham's *offering of* Iſaac *by Faith did lively repreſent the real oblation of Chriſt; but in that reſpect was of little or no uſe till Chriſt was indeed Crucified; it being impoſſible to make that Hiſtory a groundwork of their Faith in Chriſt. The like may be ſaid of the Legal Sacrifices.*

And for a clear underſtanding of the direct uſe of this Law, I refer the Reader to that Sermon: Where it is fully, and (in my opinion) as judiciouſly diſcourſed as I have ever elſewhere met with it.

Secondly, Nor were theſe ſpecial Favourites of heaven upon any other accounts in circumſtances for the obtaining of a thorow reformation of life, renovati-

on and purification of nature, comparable to those which our Saviour hath blessed his Disciples with. For though they had (as we said) for the substance the same *Spiritual Precepts* which are enjoyned in the Gospel over and above the *Mosaical* Law; yet these were inforced by no *expres* promises of eternal happiness, or threatnings of eternal misery: Nor was so much as a *life to come* otherwise than by Tradition, or by certain ambiguous expressions (for the most part) of their inspired men, or by such sayings as onely implyed it, and from which it might be rationally concluded, discovered to them: As for instance, in that place particularly, where God by his representative, an Angel, declared himself to his servant *Moses* to be *the God of*
Exod. 3. 6 *Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*; from whence our Saviour inferred that Doctrine for this Reason, That *God is*
Matth. 22. 32. *not the God of the dead, but of the living.* And that the notices they had hereof were not very plain and clear, is apparent, in that there was a Sect among them, *viz.* the *Sadduces*, that professed to disbelieve it; and yet, notwithstanding, were continued in the body, and enjoyed the privileges of the Jewish Church. But that one forecited Assertion of the Apo-

stle,

ſtle, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. putteth this out of all queſtion, *viz.* That Chriſt hath *brought Life and Immortality to light through the Goſpel.* From whence we may aſſuredly gather thus much at leaſt, *viz.*. That in the Goſpel is manifeſtly revealed Life and Immortality which was never before made known ſo certainly.

I adde moreover that the Iſraelites were required to keep at ſuch a diſtance from all other Nations, that they could not but be by that means greatly inclined to moroſity, ſelf-conceitedneſs, and contempt of their fellow-creatures: And were ever and anon employed in ſuch ſervices as naturally tended, through the weakneſs of their natures, to make their ſpirits too angry and fierce, not to ſay *cruel.* As for inſtance, that of deſtroying God's and their enemies, and ſometimes their innocent children too, and the cattle that belonged to them. And ſeveral connivances and Indulgences they had (as in the Caſes of Divorce and Polygamy and Revenge) which did not a little conduce to the gratifying of Senſuality, and the Animal life in them: All which are taken away by our Saviour Chriſt. Theſe things with diverſe others, made it in an *ordinary way* impoſſible for thoſe people to arrive at

that height of vertue and true goodneſs, that the Goſpel deſigneth to raiſe us to. And though we find ſome of them very highly commended for their great Sanctity; we are to underſtand thoſe *Encomiums* for the *moſt* part, at leaſt, with a reference to the Diſpenſation under which they were; and as implying a conſideration of the Circumſtances they were in, and the means they enjoyed.

And thus have we ſhewed what a moſt admirably effectual courſe our Bleſſed Saviour hath taken *to purifie us from all filthineſs both of the fleſh and ſpirit*, and to make us in all reſpects Righteous and Holy: And how much the Chriſtian Diſpenſation excelleth others as to its aptneſs for this purpoſe. And from what hath been ſaid we may ſafely conclude, That neither the world, nor any part of it was ever favored by God with means for the accompliſhment of this work, comparable to thoſe which are contained in the Chriſtian Religion.

So that, well might S. *Paul* call the Goſpel of Chriſt *the power of God to Salvation*, that is, both from miſery and the cauſe of it. Well may the weapons of the Chriſtian Warfare be ſaid *not* to be *carnal and weak, but mighty through God, to the pul-*

Rom. 1. 16

pulling down of strong holds, and casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Great reason had *Clemens Alexandrinus* to call our Saviour ἀνθρωπίνης παιδαγωγὸς, *the Instructer and School-master of Humane Nature*; and to say (as he doth in the following words,) *That he hath endeavoured to save us by using with all his might, all the instruments of Wisdom, or all wise courses, and draws us back by many bridles from gratifying unreasonable appetites.* And *Justin Martyr*, speaking of the Gospel, had cause pathetically to break out as he did, in these words, ὦ παθῶν ἐμῶν φυγαδευτήριον, &c *O thou expeller and chaser away of evil affections! O thou extinguisher of burning lusts! This is that which makes us not Poets or Philosophers or excellent Orators, but of poor mortal men makes us like so many Immortal Gods, and translateth us from this low earth to those Regions that are above Olympus.* And well, again, might the same good Father, having throughly acquainted himself with the *Stoick* and *Platonick* Philosophy, (by which latter he thought himself to have gained much wisdom) and at last by the advice of an old man a

2 Cor. 10. 5.

Pædag. pag. 120.

Oratio ad Græcos. pag. 40.

ſtranger, having ſtudied the Goſpel, thus expreſs himſelf, τοῦτον μόνον φιλοσοφίαν ἀσφαλῆ καὶ σύμφορον, &c. *I found this alone to be the ſafe and profitable Philoſophy, and thus and by this means became I a Philoſopher.*

Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 225.

Symplicius ſaith thus of *Epictetus* his *Enchiridion*, That it hath πολὺ τὸ δραστήριον καὶ κατηλικὸν *ſo much of powerfulneſs and pungency*, that thoſe which are not perfectly dead, muſt needs come to underſtand thereby their own affections, and be effectually excited to the rectifying of them. Could he give ſuch a Character as this of that little Book of his Brother-Heathen; what can be invented by us high enough for the Goſpel? That, as very fine a thing as it is, being moſt apparently extremely weak and inſufficient for the purpoſe upon the account of which he praiſeth it, if compared with this bleſſed Book.

Pag. 2.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

An Objection against the Wonderful Efficacy of the Christian Religion for the purpose of making men Holy, taken from the very little success it hath herein, together with the prodigious wickedness of Christendom. An Answer given to it in three Particulars, viz. 1. *That how ill soever its success is, it is evident from the foregoing Discourse that it is not to be imputed to any weakness or Inefficacy in that Religion, The true Causes thereof assigned.* 2. *That it is to be expected that those should be the worse for the Gospel, that will not be bettered by it.* 3. *That there was a time when the Gospel's success was greatly answerable to what hath been said of its Efficacy. And that the* Primitive Christians *were people of most unblameable and Holy Lives. The* Gnostiques *improperly called* Christians *in any sense. The* Primitive Christians *proved to be men of excellent lives, by the Testimonies of Fathers contained in their Apologies for them to their Enemies; and by the Acknowledgments of their Enemies themselves. An Account given in particular of their meek &*

submissive temper, out of Tertullian. *The Admirable Story of the* Thebæan *Legion.*

IF it be now objected against what we have said of the admirable efficacy of the Christian Religion for the purpose of making men Holy, That there is but very little sign of it in the lives of those that profess to believe it: For who are more woefully lost as to all true goodness, who are more deeply sunk into sensuality and brutishness, than are the Generality of Christians? Nay among what sort of men are all manner of abominable wickednesses and villanies to be found so rife, as among them? Upon which account the name of *Christian* stinks in the nostrils of the very Jews, Turks and Pagans. Beastly intemperance and uncleannesses of all sorts, the most sordid covetousness, wretched injustice, oppressions, and cruelties; the most Deviliſh malice, envy and pride; the deadliest animosities, the most outragious feuds, dissensions and rebellions; the plainest and grossest Idolatry, highest Blasphemies and most horrid Impieties of all kinds are in no part of the world more observable than they are in Christendom; nor most of them any where so observable. And even in those places where the Go-

Goſpel is moſt truly and powerfully preached, and particularly in this our nation, there is but little more to be taken notice of in the far greater number, than the *name of Chriſtian*; nor any more of Religion, than inſignificant complementings of God, and a mere bodily worſhip of him. But what abominable vice is there, that doth not here abound? Nay where doth the *higheſt* and moſt daring of Impieties, *viz. Atheiſm* it ſelf, ſo boldly ſhew its head as it doth here? And as for thoſe among us that make the greateſt pretences to Chriſtianity, beſides a higher profeſſion, a more frequent attendance on ordinances, and a mighty zeal for certain fruitleſs opinions they have taken up, and little trifles which ſignifie nothing to the bettering of their ſouls & carrying on that which we have ſhewed is the Deſign of Chriſtianity; there is little to be obſerved in very many, if not moſt, of them, whereby they may be diſtinguiſhed from other people. But as for the ſins of covetouſneſs, pride & contempt of others, diſobedience to authority, ſedition, unpeaceableneſs, wrath & fierceneſs againſt thoſe that differ in opinion from them, cenſoriouſneſs & uncharitableneſs; it is too obvious how much the greater part of the Sects we are divided into

into are guilty of *moſt*, if not *all* of them. And that which is really *the power of Godlineſs* doth appear in the converſations of but very few.

God knows, the wickedneſs of thoſe that *enjoy* and profeſs to believe the Goſpel, is an extremely fertile and copious Theme to dilate upon; and is fitter to be the ſubject of a great volume (if any one can perſwade himſelf ſo far to rake into ſuch a noiſome Dunghil, as ſure none can except enemies to Chriſtianity) than to be diſcourſed by the bie, as it is here. Nor can there be an eaſier task undertaken than to ſhew, that not a few mere *Heathens* have behaved themſelves incomparably better towards God, their Neighbour, and themſelves, than do the Generality of thoſe that are called *Chriſtians*. Nay I fear it would not be over-difficult to make it appear, that the Generality of thoſe that never heard the Goſpel, do behave themſelves in ſeveral reſpects better than they do.

But I have no liſt to entertain my ſelf or Reader with ſuch an unpleaſant and diſmally melancholy Argument, but will betake my ſelf to anſwer the ſad objection which is from thence taken againſt the truth of our laſt diſcourſe.

1. And,

1. And, in the firſt place, let the Goſpel have never ſo little ſucceſs in promoting what is deſigned by it; whoever conſiders it, and what hath been ſaid concerning it, cannot but acknowledge that it is in *it ſelf* as fit as any thing that can be imagined for the purpoſe of throughly-reforming the *lives*, and purifying the *natures* of Mankind: And alſo incomparably more fit than any other courſe that hath ever been taken, or can be thought of. So that we may certainly conclude, That the depravedneſs of Chriſtendom is not to be aſcribed to the inefficacy of the Goſpel, but to other cauſes; Namely, mens groſs unbelief of the Truth of it, as much as they *profeſs* Faith in it: their inexcuſable neglect of conſidering the infinitely-powerful motives to a holy life contained in it; & of uſing the means conducing thereunto preſcribed by it. And theſe are inſeparable concomitants, and moſt effectual promoters of each other. Every mans Inconſideration is proportionable to his Incredulity, and his Incredulity to his Inconſideration: And how much of careleſsneſs is viſible in mens lives, ſo much of unbelief doth poſſeſs their hearts; and ſo on the contrary. Upon which account *to believe* and *to be obedient* and *not to believe* and *to be diſobedient*, are ſyno-

ſynonymous phraſes and of the ſame ſignification in the New and likewiſe in the Old Teſtament. Now it is a true ſaying of ſomebodies, *Contumaciæ nullum poſuit remedium Deus*, God hath provided no remedy (that is, no ordinary one) againſt wilfulneſs. And though the Goſpel hath ſuch a tendency as hath been ſhewn, to work the moſt excellent effects in men, yet it doth not operate as *Charmes* do, nor will it have ſucceſs upon any without their own concurrence and co-operation with it. The excellent *Rules of life* laid down in the Goſpel muſt neceſſarily ſignifie nothing to thoſe that only *hear* or *read* them, but will not *mind* them. Its *Promiſes* or *Threatnings* can be exciting to none that will not *believe* and *conſider* them: Nor can the Arguments it affordeth to provoke to aſſent, be convincing to any but thoſe that impartially weigh them; its Helps and Aſſiſtances will do *no* good, where they are totally neglected. And though there be preventing as well as aſſiſting grace going along with the Goſpel, for the effectual prevailing on mens wills to uſe their utmoſt endeavour to ſubdue their luſts, and to acquire vertuous habits; yet this grace is not ſuch as that there is no poſſibility of refuſing or quench-

quenching it. Nor is it fit it ſhould, ſeeing mankind is indued with a principle of freedom, and that this principle is as Eſſential as any other to the Humane Nature.

I will add, that this is one immediate cauſe of the unſucceſsfulneſs of the Goſpel, to which it is very much to be attributed; Namely, mens ſtrange and unaccountable miſtaking the Deſign of it. Multitudes of thoſe that profeſs Chriſtianity are ſo groſly inconſiderate, not to ſay worſe, as to conceive no better of it than as a *Science* and a *matter of Speculation:* And take themſelves (though againſt the cleareſt evidences of the contrary imaginable) for true and genuine Chriſtians, either becauſe they have a general belief of the truth of the Chriſtian Religion, and profeſs themſelves the Diſciples of Chriſt Jeſus in contradiſtinction from *Jews*, *Mahometans* and *Pagans*; and in and through him alone expect ſalvation: Or becauſe they have ſo far acquainted themſelves with the Doctrine of the Goſpel, as to be able to talk and diſpute, and to make themſelves paſs for *knowing People*: Or becauſe they have joyned themſelves to that party of Chriſtians which they preſume are of the Pureſt and moſt Reformed Model, and are zealous ſticklers for their

their peculiar forms and discriminating sentiments; and as stiff opposers of all other that are contrary to them. Now the Gospel must necessarily be as ineffectual to the rectifying of such mens minds, and Reformation of their Manners, while they have so wretchedly too low an opinion of its Design, as if it really had no better: And so long as they take it for granted that its main intention is διδάξαι, ἀ βελτιῶσαι *to make them Orthodox, not Vertuous*, it cannot be thought that they should be ever the more Holy, nay 'tis a thousand to one but they will be in one kind or other the more unholy for their Christianity.

And lastly, There are several untoward opinions very unhappily instilled into professors of Christianity, which render the Truths of the Gospel they retain a belief of, insignificant and unsuccessful as to the bettering either of their hearts or lives, as infinitely apt and of as mighty efficacy as they are in themselves for those great purposes.

2. Secondly, Whereas it was said also, that the Generality of Heathens live in diverse respects better lives, than do multitudes, and even the Generality, of those that profess Christianity; it is so far from being

being difficult to give a ſatisfactory account how this may be without diſparaging our excellent Religion; that it is to be expected that thoſe people ſhould be even much the *worſe* for it, that refuſe to be *bettered* by it. It is an old Maxime, that *Corruptio optimi eſt peſſima:* The *beſt* things being ſpoiled do prove to be the very *worſt:* And according to this, nothing leſs is to be looked for, than that degenerated Chriſtians ſhould be the vileſt of all perſons. And it is alſo certain, that the beſt things, when abuſed, do ordinarily ſerve to the worſt purpoſes; of which there may be given innumerable Inſtances. And ſo it is, in this preſent caſe. S. *Paul* told the *Corinthians*, that he and the other Apoſtles were *a ſavour of death unto death*, as well as *of life unto life*. And our Saviour gave the Phariſees to underſtand, That *for judgement he was come into the world; that thoſe that ſee not, might ſee; and that thoſe that ſee, might be made blind:* that is, That it would be a certain conſequent of his coming, not onely that poor ignorant Creatures ſhould be turned from darkneſs to light, but alſo that thoſe which have the light, and ſhut their eyes againſt it, ſhould be judicially blinded. And the forementioned Apoſtle, in

2 Cor. 2. 16.

Joh. 9. 39.

in the first Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*, saith of those that *held the truth in unrighteousness*, that would not suffer it to have any good effect upon them through their close adhering to their filthy lusts, that *God gave them up* to the most unnatural villainies, permitted them to commit them by withholding all restraints from them; and likewise *gave them over εἰς νοῦν ἀδόκιμον to a reprobate mind.* So that, from the just judgment of God it is, I say, to be expected that depraved Christians should be the most wicked of all people: And therefore it is so far from being matter of wonder, that those that will not be converted by the Gospel, should be so many of them very horribly prophane; that it is rather so, that all those which, having for any considerable time lived under the preaching of it, continue disobedient to it, should not be such. In the purest ages of the Church, were degenerated Christians made in this kind most fearful Examples of the Divine Vengeance: And so utterly forsaken of God, that they became, (if we may believe *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and others of the Antient Fathers) not one whit better than Incarnate Devils. Nor were there to be found in the whole world in those days,

days, and but rarely ſince, ſuch abominable and moſt execrable Caytiffs as they were. I have ſometimes admired that humane nature ſhould be capable of ſuch a monſtrous depravation, as ſeveral ſtories recorded of them do beſpeak them to have contracted: But,

3. Thirdly, If we muſt needs judge of the efficacy of the Goſpel for the making men Holy, by its ſucceſs herein; Let us caſt our eyes back upon the *Firſt ages of Chriſtianity*, and then we ſhall find it an eaſie matter to ſatisfie our ſelves concerning it, though we ſhould underſtand no more of Chriſtianity, than the effects it produced in thoſe days.

For though there were then a ſort of people that ſometimes called themſelves *Chriſtians*, that were (as was now ſaid) the moſt deſperately wicked Creatures that ever the earth bare; yet theſe were eſteemed by all others that were known by *that name* as no whit more of *their* number, than the *Pagans* and *Jews* that defied Chriſt. And their Religion was a motly thing that conſiſted of *Chriſtianity*, *Judaiſm* and *Paganiſm* all blended together; and therefore in regard of their mere profeſſion they could be no more truly called *Chriſtians* than *Jews* or *Pa-*

gans. Or rather (to ſpeak properly) they were of no Religion at all, but would ſometimes comply with the *Jews*, and at other times with the *Heathens*, and joyned readily with both in perſecuting the *Chriſtians*: And, in ſhort, the *Samaritans* might with leſs impropriety be called *Jews*, than theſe *Gnoſtiques*, *Chriſtians.*

'Tis alſo confeſſed that the orthodox Chriſtians were calumniated by the Heathens as flat *Atheiſts*, but their only pretence for ſo doing was their refuſing to worſhip their falſe Gods. And they likewiſe accuſed them of the beaſtlieſt and moſt horrid practices; but it is ſufficiently evident that they were beholden to the *Gnoſtiques* for thoſe accuſations; who, being accounted Chriſtians, did by their being notoriouſly guilty of them give occaſion to the enemies of Chriſtianity to reproach all the profeſſors of it as moſt filthy and impure creatures. I know it is commonly ſaid, that thoſe Calumnies proceeded purely from the Heathens malicious invention, but it is apparent that thoſe vile Hereticks gave occaſion to them. But that the Chriſtians were ſo far from being guilty of ſuch monſtrous crimes, that they did lead moſt inoffenſive and good lives, doth abundantly appear by the Apologies

pologies that diverse of the Fathers made to the Heathen Emperors and people in their behalf. *Justin Martyr* in his Apology to *Antoninus Pius* hath this saying ἡμέτερον οὖν ἔργον &c. *It is our interest that all persons should make a narrow inquisition into our lives and doctrine, and to expose them to the view of every one.* And he afterwards tells that Emperor, *That his people had nothing to lay to their charge truly, but their bare name, Christians.* And again, *That they which in times past took pleasure in unclean practices, do live now (that they are become converts to Christianity) pure and chast lives: They which used magical arts, do now consecrate and devote themselves to the eternal and good God: They which preferred the incomes of their money and possessions before all things else, do now cast them into the common stock; and communicate them to any that stand in need: They which once hated each other, and mutually engaged in bloody battles, and (according to the custom) would not keep a common fire* πρὸς τοὺς οὐκ ὁμοφύλους with those that were not of the same tribe, *now live lovingly and familiarly together with them; That now they pray for their very enemies; and those which persecute them with unjust hatred they endeavour to win to them*

by perſwaſions, that they *alſo, living according to the honeſt precepts of Chriſt, may have the ſame hope, and gain the ſame reward with themſelves from the great Governour and Lord of the world.*

Athenagoras in his Apology, ſaith thus to the Emperors *Aurelius Antoninus*; and *Aurelius Commodus*; *As very gracious and benign as you are to all others, you have no care of us who are called* Chriſtians; *for ye ſuffer us who commit no evil, nay, who (as ſhall hereafter appear) do behave our ſelves of all men moſt piouſly and juſtly both towards God and your Government, to be vexed, to be put to flight from place to place, and to be violently dealt with.* And then he adds ſome lines after; *If any of you can convict us of any great or ſmall crime, we are ready to bear the moſt ſevere puniſhment, that can be inflicted upon us.* And ſpeaking of the Calumnies that ſome had faſtened upon them, he ſaith; *If you can find that theſe things are true, ſpare no age, no ſex; but utterly root us up and deſtroy us with our wives and children, if you can prove that any of us live like to beaſts* &c.

And there is very much to the ſame purpoſe in *Tertullian*'s Apology: Where he tels *the* Roman Governours, *That they dealt otherwiſe with the* Chriſtians, *than with any other*

other whom they accounted Malefactors; For whereas they tortured others to make them confeſs the faults they were accuſed of, they tortured theſe to make them deny themſelves to be Chriſtians: And that having no crime beſides to lay to their charge which carried the leaſt ſhew of truth, their profeſſing themſelves to be no Chriſtians would at at any time procure for them their abſolution. And to this objection, that there are ſome Chriſtians that do *excedere à regula diſciplnæ*, depart from the rules of their Religion, and live diſorderly; here turneth this anſwer, *Deſinunt tamen Chriſtiani haberi penes nos, But thoſe that do ſo, are no longer by us accounted Chriſtians.* And by the way, let me recite *Rigaltius* his ſhort note upon this paſſage, *At perſeverant hodiè in nomine et numero Chriſtianorum, qui vitam omnem vivunt Antichriſti; But thoſe now a-days do retain the name and ſociety of Chriſtians, which live altogether Anti-chriſtian lives.* And (proceeds he) *Tolle publicanos &c.* Take away Publicans and a wretched rabble which he muſters together, *et frigebunt hodiernorum Eccleſiæ Chriſtianorum, and our preſent Chriſtian Churches will be lamentably weak, ſmall and inſignificant things.*

From theſe few citations out of the Apologies of the forementioned Fathers, to which may be added abundance more of the ſame nature both out of them and others, we may judge what rare ſucceſs the Goſpel had in the *firſt ages*, and what a vaſt difference there is between the Chriſtians of *thoſe*, and of *theſe* daies; that is, between the Chriſtians that were under perſecution, and thoſe that ſince have lived in eaſe and proſperity. When the Chriſtian Religion came to be the Religion of Nations, and to be owned and encouraged by Emperors and Rulers, then was the whole vaſt *Roman* Empire quickly perſwaded to march under its Banner; and the very worſt of men for *faſhions ſake*, and in expectation of *Temporal* Advantages, came flocking into the Church of Chriſt. Nay the *worſe* men were and the leſs of conſcience they had, the more forward might they *then* be ſo to do, the more haſte they might make to renounce their former Religion and take upon them the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity. And no ſooner was the Church ſet in the warm ſun-ſhine of worldly Riches and Honours, but it is apparent ſhe was inſenſibly over-run with thoſe noiſome vermine, which have bred and multiplyed ever

ever ſince, even for many Centuries of years, in her.

If any ſhall doubt whether the forementioned Fathers might not give too good a character of the Chriſtians whoſe cauſe they pleaded; I deſire them to conſider whether or no it be imaginable that they ſhould ſo do, ſeeing their enemies, to whom they wrote their defences of them, could eaſily, they living among them, have diſcovered the falſity of their commendations. And we find them frequently appealing to the Heathens own Conſciences whether they themſelves did not believe that to be no other than the truth which they ſaid of them: And moreover we have them ever and anon triumphing over them, and provoking them to ſhew ſuch effects of their *Philoſophy* and *way of Religion*, as they themſelves could witneſs were produced by the *Goſpel* of Chriſt.

Nay, and we have their Adverſaries themſelves giving them a very high Character. *Tertullian* in his forementioned Apology ſaith, that *Pliny* the ſecond (who was a perſecutor of Chriſtians) wrote thus to the Emperour *Trajan* from the Province where he ruled under him,

viz. That, *Besides their Resolute refusing to offer Sacrifice, he could learn nothing concerning their Religion, but that they held Meetings before day to sing praises to Christ and God, and to engage their Sect in solemn Leagues; forbidding Murther, Adultery, Deceit, Disloyalty and all other wickednesses.*

Præter obstinationem non sacrificandi, nihil aliud se de sacramentis eorum comperisse, quàm cœtus antelucanos ad canendum Christo & Deo, & ad confœderandam Disciplinam: homicidium, adulterium, fraudem, perfidiam & cætera scelera prohibentes.

And in a now extant Epistle of his to that Emperor, we find him giving him this information, *viz.* That, some that had renounced Christianity, and now worshipped his Image, and the Statues of their Gods, and cursed Christ, did affirm, *That this was the Greatest fault or Errour they were guilty of, that they were wont upon a set day to assemble together before it was light, and to sing a Hymn to Christ as to a God; and to bind themselves by a Sacrament, not to any wickedness, but that they would not commit Thefts, Robberies, Adulteries; that they would not be worse than their words, that they would not deny any thing intrusted in their hands when demanded of them: which done, it was their custome to depart, and to meet again,* ad capien-

Lib. 10. *Epist.* 97. *Edit. ult.*

Affirmabant autem, hanc fuisse summam vel culpæ suæ, vel erroris, quòd essent soliti stato die ante lucem convenire; carmenq; Christo, quasi Deo, dicere secum invicem, seque Sacramento non in scelus aliquod obstringere, sed ne furta, ne latrocinia, ne adulteria committerent, ne fidem fallerent, ne depositum appellati abnegarent, &c.

piendũ cibũ promiſcuũ, tamen & innoxiũ, *to eat a common but innocent and harmleſs meal:* which was doubtleſs the *Agape* or *Feaſt of Charity*, which was in the primitive times in uſe among the Chriſtians after the Celebration of the Lord's Supper. This was an excellent account of them, and much too good to be expected from wicked Apoſtates, ſuch having been ordinarily obſerved to be of all others, the moſt deadly enemies of Chriſtianity and the profeſſors of it.

But to return to our Author, he a few lines after adds, that he put two Maid-ſervants upon the Rack, to extort from them as full a diſcovery as he could of the Chriſtians Crimes; *but he could not find any they were guilty of, except obſtinate and exceſſive ſuperſtition*: So he called their conſtant perſeverance and diligence in obſerving the Precepts of their moſt excellent Religion.

——*Sed nihil aliud inveni, quàm Superſtitionem pravam & immodicam.*

And the Emperour *Antoninus Pius*, as much an enemy of Chriſtians as he was, writes thus in an Epiſtle to the People of *Aſia* (which is to be ſeen in *Juſtin Martyr*, and affixed to the Apology he directed to him,) *viz. That they could make no proof of the Crimes they laid to the Chriſtians charge,*

Juſtin. Martyr. Apolog. ad Antoninum Pium.

charge, and that they overcame them by chuſing to lay down their lives rather than to do the things they required of them: And that he thought it fit to advertiſe them, that the Chriſtians, when Earth-quakes happened, were not under ſuch dreadful fears as they *were; and that they were* ἐυπαῤῥησιαςότερον πρὸς τὸν Θεὸν *indued with a firmer confidence and truſt in God.* And there next followeth another Epiſtle of the Emperour *Antoninus Philoſophus* to the Senate and People of *Rome*; wherein he gave them an account of an eminent danger that he and his Army were in, in the Heart of *Germany*, by the ſudden approach of nine hundred and ſeventy thouſand Barbarians and Enemies: And how that finding his ſtrength to oppoſe them very ſmall, he commanded all thoſe to appear before him who were called *Chriſtians*, (as ſuſpecting, 'tis like, either their fidelity or courage) and perceiving there were a great number of them, very ſharply inveighed againſt them: *Which* (ſaith he) *I ought not to have done in regard of the vertue which I after found to be in them; whereby they began the fight not with Darts and Weapons and ſound of Trumpets; which thing they approved not* διὰ τὸν Θεὸν ὃν φορῦσι ἐν σωνειδήσει out of reſpect to God whom they bear in their

their conſcience. *Wherefore* (proceeds he) *it is meet that we ſhould know that thoſe whom we ſuſpect for Atheiſts,* Θεὸν ἔχουσιν ἀυτόματον ἐν τῇ συνειδήσει πεπυχισμένον, have God willingly incloſed, or of his own accord inhabiting, in their Conſcience: *For laying themſelves flat upon the earth, they prayed not only for me, but alſo for my whole Army, which was then preſent, that they might be a means of ſolace and comfort to us, in our preſent hunger and thirſt, (for we could not come by any water for five days together:) But as ſoon as they were poſtrate upon the Ground, and prayed to a God whom I knew not, immediately there fell Rain from Heaven, upon us, very cool and refreſhing, but upon our Adverſaries* χάλαζα πυρώδης a fiery Hail-ſtorm: *And their prayer was inſtantly accompanyed with the preſence of God, as of one invincible and inſuperable. Therefore let us permit theſe people to be Chriſtians, leſt they praying to have the like weapons imployed againſt us, they ſhould obtain their deſire.* And a few lines after, the Emperour declared it his Will and Pleaſure, That *whoſoever accuſeth a Chriſtian as ſuch, for the time to come, he ſhall be burnt alive.*

What better ſatisfaction can be deſired by us, concerning the truth of the foremen-

mentioned Fathers account of the Chriſtians that lived in their days, than that which the Pens of theſe their enemies have given to us ?

There is one thing more I will adde concerning the primitive Chriſtians, *viz.* That the moſt calm, meek, peaceable, gentle and ſubmiſſive temper recommended in the Goſpel did mightily diſcover its ſelf in them: And thereby we may judge what kind of people they were as to the other parts of Chriſtianity; it being impoſſible that ſuch an excellent ſpirit ſhould be alone, and unaccompanied with the other Vertues. Though they were for the moſt part very ſorely perſecuted, yet, as *Tertullian* ſaith (in his Book *ad Nationes*) *Nunquam conjuratio erupit*, there was never any uproar or hurly-burly among them. And having, in his Apology, ask'd the two Emperors and the reſt this Queſtion, *If we are commanded to love our Enemies, whom have we then to hate?* He thus proceeds: *How often do you your ſelves rage againſt the Chriſtians who are obedient unto you, and moreover ſuffer them to be ſtoned and burnt by the rout of common people; but yet what Revenge did ye ever obſerve them repaying for the injuries done unto them, as ſtout hearted*

ed as they are even to death it ſelf?

If it be objected (as it is by ſome) that this might be attributed not to their good temper, but to mere neceſſity, ſeeing they knew themſelves too weak to ſucceed in any rebellious or violent attempt: Let the ſame *Tertullian* give an anſwer; and he doth it in the very next words. *In one night* (ſaith he) *with a few Firebands they could revenge themſelves ſufficiently upon you, if they thought it lawful to render evil for evil.* Nay, and not only ſo, but he tells them plainly that they were in circumſtances to manage the parts of *hoſtes exerti*, open enemies againſt them, as well as of *vindices occulti*, ſly and ſecret revengers; and that they could raiſe an Army, if it pleaſed them, numerous and powerful enough to cope with them: and withal he thus proceeds: *Heſterni ſumus, & veſtra omnia implevimus, &c. Though we are but as it were of yeſterday, yet you have no place but is full of us; your Cities, your Iſlands, Caſtles, Towns, Council-houſes; your fortreſſes, Tribes, Bands of Souldiers, Palace, Senate, Court*, Sola vobis relinquimus templa, *Your* Temples *onely are empty of us. And he goes on* Cui bello non idonei, &c. *What battles are not we able to wage with you, who are ſo willingly ſlain by you;*

you; but according to the Laws of our Religion we eſteem it better to be killed than to kill. Nay, he next tells them, *potuimus inermes nec rebelles, &c. We need not take arms and rebel to revenge our ſelves upon you, for we are ſo great a part of the Empire, that by but departing from you, we ſhould utterly deſtroy it, and affright you with your own Solitude, and leave you more enemies than loyal Subjects.* And ſo far were they from making uſe of the advantages they had to deliver themſelves by the way of violence, That (as not long after he ſaith to them) *they prayed for the Emperours, and thoſe in Authority under them, for peace and a quiet ſtate of affairs among them,* and (as ſome where he adds) *very ready alſo to give them aſſiſtance againſt their enemies.*

The ſtory of the *Thebæan* Legion is wonderful to aſtoniſhment; it conſiſted of juſt ſix thouſand ſix hundred ſixty and ſix men, and all *Chriſtian.* Theſe when *Maximianus Cæſar* went about to compel them to offer Sacrifice to the heatheniſh Gods at a place called *Octodurum*, they fled to another called *Agaunum*; & when he ſent after them to require them to obey that his command, they drew up together into a Body, and with one voice profeſſed that they could not

not do it. *Maximianus* thereupon commanded that every *tenth man* of them ſhould be ſlain upon the place; which accordingly was immediately done without the leaſt reſiſtance. *Mauritius*, the General of this Legion, thus addreſſed himſelf to the Souldiers: *Quàm timui ne quiſquam, quod Armatis facile eſt, &c. How fearful was I leſt any of you, being in Arms, and therefore no hard matter to do it, ſhould attempt the defending of your ſelves, and by that means prevent a happy and moſt glorious death.* And ſo goes on moſt excellently, to encourage them rather to ſubmit to death, than reſiſt their Emperour. When every *tenth* man was ſlain, the Emperour repeated his command to the ſurvivers, and they all thus anſwered: *Milites quidem, Cæſar, tui ſumus, &c. We are, it is confeſſed, thy Souldiers, O* Cæſar, *for the defence of the* Roman *Republique; nor have we ever proved either traytors, or cowards; but this command of thine we cannot obey; For know, we are all Chriſtians; yet all our* bodies *ſhall be ſubject to thee, &c.* At laſt *Exuperius* their Enſign concludes thus, *Non nos adverſum Te, Imperator, armavit ipſa, quæ fortiſſima eſt in periculis, deſperatio, &c. Deſpair it ſelf hath not armed us againſt thee, O Emperour; behold we have all our weapons in our hands,*

and

and yet resist not; because we had rather die innocent than live nocent. And thereupon they were all put to the slaughter, not a man of them once offering to defend himself. You may find the Relation of this more at large, taken out of *Eucherius* by *Grotius*, and set down in his Book *De jure Belli & Pacis.*

Pag. 115. *Origen* also tells *Celsus* that he or any of his party were able to shew οὐδὲν στάσεως ἔργον *nothing of Sedition* that the Christians were ever guilty of: And yet, what *Tertullian* said of the *Roman* Empire in General, this Father elsewhere in the same book speaketh of *Greece* and *Barbary, viz.* That the Gospel had subdued all that Country and the greater part of this, and had brought over to Godliness souls innumerable.

Thus you see how far the Primitive Christians were from the tumultuous, fiery, and boisterous Spirit, that Christendom above all other parts of the world hath been since infested with. And thus we have shewn that there was once a time (God grant that the like may be again) when the success of the Christian Religion in conquering mens lusts and rectifying their Natures, was greatly answerable to the efficacy that it hath for this purpose. And so we pass to the second Inference.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

The Second Inference.

That we understand from what hath been said of the Design of Christianity, *how fearfully it is abused by those that call themselves the* Roman Catholiques. *That the* Church *of* Rome *hath by several of her Doctrines enervated all the Precepts and the Motives to Holiness contained in the Gospel. That she hath rendered the Means therein prescribed for the attainment thereof extremely ineffectual. That she hath also as greatly corrupted them. Diverse Instances of the* Papists Idolatry. *Their* Image worship *one Instance. Their* praying to Saints departed *another. Other Impieties accompanying it, mentioned. Some account of their Blasphemies, particularly in their* Prayers to the Blessed Virgin. *Their* worshipping the Hoast *the third and Grossest instance of their Idolatry. Some other of their Wicked and most* Anti-christian *Doctrines.*

SEcondly, By what hath been said concerning the *Design of the Christian Religion,*

ligion, we eaſily underſtand how fearfully it is abuſed by thoſe that call themſelves the *Roman Catholiques*. Nor need we any other Argument to prove *Popery* to be nothing leſs than *Chriſtianity* beſides this, *viz.* That the Grand Deſign of *this* is to make us holy; and alſo aimeth at the raiſing of us to the moſt *Elevated* pitch of Holineſs, and is admirably contrived for that purpoſe: But the Religion of the *Papiſts* as ſuch doth moſt apparently tend to carry on a Deſign that is diametrically oppoſite thereunto: To ſerve a moſt carnal and corrupt intereſt; to give men ſecurity in a way of ſinning; and pretendeth to teach them a way to do, at one and the ſame time effectually, the moſt contrary and inconſiſtent works: That is, to *deprave their natures*, and *ſave their Souls*; and even in gratifying their wicked inclinations to lay a firm and ſafe foundation for eternal happineſs. So that, if *this* (as they pretend it alone is) be the Chriſtian Religion, we muſt needs ingenuouſly acknowledge, that what we ſaid in the Introduction was by *Celſus* and *Julian* charged upon it, is no calumny, but an accuſation moſt juſt and well deſerved. For as the *Church of Rome* hath rendred diverſe excellent *Precepts* of Holineſs contained in the

the Gospel very in-effectual, by making them *Counsels* onely, not *Commands:* and also not a few of its *Prohibitions* unnecessary by her Distinction of sins into *Mortal* and *Venial*; understanding by *Venial* sins such as for the sake of which no man can deserve to lose the Divine favour; and therefore making them really no sins: So hath she enervated all the *Evangelical Commandments* both *Positive* and *Negative*, and made them sadly insignificant by a multitude of Doctrines that are taught by her most Darling-sons, and decreed or allowed by her self. That one Popish Doctrine of the *Non-necessity of Repentance before the imminent point of Death*, and that (though the Church requireth it upon Holy-days, yet) no man is bound by the Divine Law to it until that time, is of it self, without the help of any other, sufficient to take away the force of all the holy *Precepts* of our Saviour, and to make them utterly unsuccessful to the Embracers of it: And this other goeth beyond that in aptness for this purpose, *viz.* That mere *Attrition*, or sorrow for sin for fear of Damnation, if it be accompanied with Confession to the Priest, is sufficient for Salvation. For, as the former maketh a *Death-bed-repentance* onely necessary; So this

larter makes that Repentance alone ſo, which is far from deſerving to be ſo called, and which wants the principal Ingredients of that Grace, *viz. Hatred of ſin*, and *Love to God and goodneſs*; and conſequently works no *change* in the *nature* of the ſinner, nor makes him partaker in the leaſt meaſure of true holineſs.

The *Threats of hell* have they made a mere Bug-bear, and Scare-crow by their Doctrine of *Purgatory*; and the fear of *this* too have they taken a notable courſe to ſecure men from by that of *Penances*, and the *Indulgences* granted by their Popes very ordinarily for doing certain odde Trifles and idle things; but which by money can never fail to be procured. Nor are the moſt *horrid impieties* ſhut out from having their ſhare in his Holineſs his *Indulgences*; as more than ſufficiently appears by the *Tax of the Apoſtical Chancery*; where to thoſe that will pay the price, Abſolutions are to be had for the moſt *abominable* and not to be named villainies, nay and *Licences* alſo, for not a few wickednesſes.

I may adde to the forementioned, their Doctrine of the Meritorious *Supererogations* of the Saints, which, being applied to others, they teach to be available for their

their pardon; which beſides its moſt impious making many Co-ſaviours with Jeſus Chriſt, doth infinitely encourage to careleſsneſs and looſe living.

The Religion of the *means* preſcribed in the Goſpel, have they done what lay in them to make both extremely ineffectual and highly irreligious. I ſay,

Firſt, *Moſt ineffectual:* For they will have the *bare ſaying of Prayers* without the leaſt minding of what is ſaid, to be acceptable to and prevalent with Almighty God: And congruouſly to this fine Doctrine their Church enjoyns them to be ſaid in a Tongue that is unknown to the generality of her children. Though the *Papiſts* cannot for ſhame but acknowledge it a *good* thing to give attention of mind to what is ſpoken in the worſhip of God, yet I ſay it is well known that they deny it to be *neceſſary* ſo to do; and make the mere *Opus operatum* the work done ſufficient, and that in all Acts of Devotion whatſoever. And beſides their Divine Service is made by them an idle and vain piece of Pageantry by the abundance of foppiſh Ceremonies it is burthened with. Nay,

Secondly, It is made as *wicked* as *ineffectual:* It being accompanied with ſo great Immoralities as *Groſs Idolatries*,

together with other very impious practices: whereof

First, *Their worshiping of Images* is a notorious Instance: They making pictures of Christ and his Cross, and even of the holy Trinity, and giving (as they themselves profess to do) *Latria* or Divine Honour to them. And as for what they have, by stretching their wits upon the Tenters, invented to defend themselves from the guilt of *Idolatry* in those actions, it will do the Heathens as much service as themselves, and no less successfully clear and acquit them from that foul imputation. *Celsus* in defence of their Idols saith, That they are not Gods, but Θεῶν ἀναθήματα *Gifts consecrated to them.* And the Heathens in *Lactantius* are brought in saying, *Non ipsa timemus simulachra, &c. We fear, or worship not the Images themselves, but those whose Representatives they are, and to whose names they are consecrated.* And several other citations might be produced to shew, that the *Divine Honour* that was by the Heathens bestowed on their Images, was *Relative only* (as the *Papists* say theirs is, and think they get a main matter by so saying) and not *Absolute.* But as for their worship of the *Image of the Cross*, it is grosser Idolatry than I believe can be shewn the wiser

wiſer ſort of Pagans were ever guilty of. For the *Croſs* it ſelf is the Ultimate Term of their Divine Adoration, and the *Image* is worſhip'd *Relatively*, as it repreſents the *Croſs*: In ſhort, their *Image-worſhip* is as expreſly forbidden by the ſecond Commandment as words can do it, and one may conclude that they themſelves are not a little conſcious of it, in that *That Commandment* is left out of their Offices of frequent uſe.

Secondly, Another plain Inſtance of their *Idolatry* is their *Praying to Saints Departed.* And whereas they pretend that they confer not upon them any Divine Honour, and that they onely pray to the Saints to pray for them; this pretence is but a pityfully thin Cob-web to hide the Idolatry of that their practice. For beſides that their Invocations of them and of the *ſame Saints* too in innumerable places at vaſt diſtances each from other, do imply an opinion of ſuch an excellency in them, (*viz.* ſuch a knowledge as can hardly be at all ſhort of *Omniſcience*) as we can no where find God Almighty hath vouchſafed to any Creature; they likewiſe make their prayers to them with profeſſions of confidence in them, and with all the Rites of Invocation, in Sacred Offices, and in pla-

ces set apart for Divine Worship; and moreover they set particular Saints over whole Cities and Countries (one single one over this and another over that) and put up petitions to them for their help and succour. And the *Roman Catechism* made by the Decree of the Council of *Trent*, and published by the Popes command doth give them encouragement so to do (as the late Bishop of *Down* sheweth in the former part of his *Dissuasive from Popery*) in these words; *The Saints are therefore to be invocated, because they continually make prayers for the Health of man-kind, and God gives us many benefits by their merit and favour: And it is lawful to have recourse to the favour or Grace of the Saints, and to use their help; for they undertake the Patronage of us.* And he adds that the Council of *Trent* doth not onely say, It is good to fly to their *prayers*, but also to their *aid*, and to their *help*. And he furthermore minds them of this Distich in the Church of S. *Laurence* in *Rome*, Pag. 9.

Continet hoc Templum Sanctorũ corpora pura,
A quibus auxilium suppleri, poscere cura.

Within this Church Saints holy bodies ly,
Pray them, that they wth help would thee supply.

So

So that over and above the Great *Impiety* of their *praying to Saints*, discovered in making them in some kind equal with Christ, and in derogating from the sufficiency of his merits, satisfaction and intercession; God being prayed to with reliance on *theirs* as well as on *his*, and through *them* as well as *him*; (as may be farther and largly shewn in their prayers, and chiefly in those to the Blessed Virgin;) I say besides this gross *Impiety* of that practice, it can never be justified from the charge of *Idolatry*. And by whatsoever Arguments they endeavor therein to prove themselves no Idolaters, it will be no difficult matter by the same to vindicate the Heathens from that abominable crime in worshipping their *Dæmons*, *Heroes* and *Deified* Emperours. And for *Hierocles* his part, I cannot find that he alloweth of praying to any one but him whom he calls the *Supreme God:* For, speaking of the honour that is due to that order of spirits which is immediately subordinate to Him, and above the *Dæmons* and *Heroes*, all he saith concerning it is, that it consisteth in understanding the excellency of their natures, and in endeavouring after a likeness to them; where as he hath afterward a very excellent Discourse of tho

Pag. 22.

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neceſſary obligation men are under of praying to God.

But I have not yet inſtanced in the worſt part of the *Popiſh* prayers to departed Saints, the blaſphemies contained in thoſe to the *Virgin Mary* are ſuch as I would not defile my pen with the recital of any of them, did I not know it to be too needful ſo to do. She is ſtiled in their publique prayers, *the Saviour of Deſparing Souls*, *the beſtower of Spiritual Grace* and *Diſpenſer of the moſt Divine Gifts*; *One higher than the heavens*, *and deeper than the earth*; and many ſuch compellations as are proper onely to ſome one Perſon of the glorious Trinity, are given in them to her. In her Anthem ſhe is ſupplicated for *pardon of ſin*, for *Grace* and for *Glory*. And the foremen-tioned Learned Biſhop obſerveth that in the Maſs-Book penned One thouſand five hundred thirty eight, and uſed in the *Polonian* Churches, they call the Bleſſed Virgin *viam ad vitam*, *&c. the way to Life*, *the Governeſs of all the World*, *the Reconciler of ſinners with God*, *the Fountain of Remiſſion of ſins*, *Light of Light:* And at laſt ſhe is there ſaluted with an *Ave univerſæ Trinitatis Mater*, *Hail thou Mother of the Holy Trinity*. And he adds that the Council of *Conſtance* in the Hymn they call

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a *Sequence*, did invocate the *Virgin* in the ſame manner as Councils did uſe to invocate the *Holy Ghoſt*: That they call her the *Mother of Grace*, *the Remedy of the Miſerable*, *the Fountain of Mercy*, *and the Light of the Church*. And laſtly his Lordſhip alleageth a *Pſalter of our Lady*, that hath been ſeveral times Printed at *Venice*, at *Paris* and *Leipſich*, the Title of which is, *The Pſalter of the Bleſſed Virgin compiled by the Seraphical Doctor S.* Bonaventure, *&c.* Which conſiſteth of the *Pſalms of David*, One hundred and fifty in number: in which the name of *Lord* is left out, and that of *Lady* put in, and altered where it was neceſſary they ſhould, to make ſenſe. Therein, whatſoever *David* ſaid, whether prayers or praiſes of *God* and *Chriſt*, they ſay of the *Bleſſed Virgin*; *and whether* (ſaith he) *all that can be ſaid without intolerable Blaſphemy*, *we ſuppoſe needs not much diſputation*. Who would not readily conclude it altogether impoſſible for any men to invent, or approve, nay or not to have indignation againſt ſuch daring and moſt execrable Impieties, that are not utterly bereft of their ſenſes, or are but one remove from perfect *Atheiſts*? There are diverſe other moſt prodigious ſayings concerning the Virgin *Mary* tranſcribed out of the

the approved Books of Great Sons of the *Roman Church*, in the now cited *Dissuasive from Popery*, to which I refer the Reader. And to them I will adde some which may doubtless vie with the worst that we can well imagine were ever uttered, of one *Johannes Argentus* a Prime Catholique youth, which he hath exposed to the view of the world in a Right worthy piece, treating of the seven Excellencies of the most Blessed Virgin. Saith he, *Christus servit atque assidue ministrat Matri suæ, Christ serveth and continually administreth to his Mother*; and next thus vents himself in a great fit of Devotion to her. *O si liceret, quàm libenter me illi socium adjungerem, &c. If it might be lawful, Oh, how gladly would I joyn my self with him as his Companion! How willingly would I learn of him the way of perfectly serving thy self, and God!* (the Reader will not anon judge his *placing the Virgin before God himself* as proceeding from inadvertency,) *How willingly would I ease my most sweet Jesus of this his labour! O Lord Jesu my most lovely Saviour permit me to perform some service to thy Mother; but if thou wilt not grant me this, yet at least give me leave, that whilest thou servest thy Mother, I may serve thee.* And he tells us afterward, that, *God is in other creatures*

creatures after a threefold manner, by his Essence, by his Presence, and by his Power; but in the most Blessed Virgin after a fourth manner, viz. *by Identity or being one and the self-same with her.* Who could think that the worst should be yet behind? Let the Reader judge whether it be or no. He farther saith, That *her seventh degree of excellency consists in this, quòd sit Domina Dei, that she is the Mistriss of God.* And then a line or two after, as if he had thought that he had not yet sufficiently performed the part of a most impudent blasphemer, he adds that *supra ipsum thronum Dei solium suum collocavit, she hath erected her seat above the very throne of God.* This was a Fellow that had improved to purpose the Prayers he had learn'd of his holy Mother. Surely she could not find in her heart to deny so passionately devout a worshipper of the Holy Virgin a very considerable share in the Merits of her *Supererogations:* or rather may we not think that she would judge him so great a Saint as to stand in no need of them; and to have of his *own* to spare, wherewith to add to the riches of her treasury, for the relief of those who being conscious to themselves of being too dry and cold devotionists can be perswaded to go to the charge of them?

Have

Have we not now infinite cause to wonder that the *Papists* should take it so very heinously at our hands, that we fasten upon them the imputation of *Idolatry*! This very wretch would have been sensible of an unsufferable abuse, should one have call'd him *Idolater*, as Blasphemous a one as he was, and notwithstanding his having even *more than Deified* a mere Creature, and advanced her Throne even *above* her Creator's. Lord! to what heights of Impiety will Superstition lead men! and how thick is that darkness she blindeth the eyes of her captives with, that it will not suffer them to discern that guilt which is no whit less apparent than is the Sun it self. But

Thirdly, The grossest Instance of the *Church of Rome's Idolatry* we have yet omitted; and that is their *worshipping the Consecrated Bread*, not as God's Representative, but (which is far worse) as God himself, in *the Sacrament of the Altar* (as they call it) and on other occasions. This is no where to be parallel'd for the sottishness of it, no not among the most Barbarous and Bruitish Nations; it being founded upon the most absurd, contradictious, portentous and monstrous conceit that ever entered the head of any mor-

mortal: as they have had it unanſwerably and to the confuſion of their faces proved to them by a multitude of Learned Perſons of the Reformed Religion: who have alſo ſo fully, and with ſuch mighty and irreſiſtible ſtrength made good the forementioned charge of *Idolatry*, and of other Impious Practices and Principles againſt them, that it is unimaginable how it ſhould be poſſible that any who are not ſtark-blind, or reſolved that they will not ſee, ſhould not acknowledge them. And as for the elaborate tricks whereby they endeavour to juſtifie themſelves from thoſe Accuſations, and to perſwade the World that they are undeſerved, they may doubtleſs, whenſoever they ſhall have a mind to it, deviſe others no leſs plauſible with as little pains, to make forcing of Virgins no Rape, lying with other folks Wives no Adultery, cutting of Purſes no Theft, Robbing of Churches no Sacrilege; and in one word, they may with as little exerciſe of their brains invent ways to do whatſoever is moſt flatly forbidden in the ten Commandments, without being guilty of tranſgreſſing any one of them.

I might proceed to inſtance in very many other Doctrines of the Romiſh Church, which

which by what we have said of the Christian Religion we may be perfectly assured are *Anti-Christian*; but I will onely adde two or three more. As, their asserting the Insufficiency of the holy Scriptures for mens salvation, and denying them to be the Sole Rule of Faith, and joyning with them their own paltry *Traditions* as equally necessary to be believed; and this against the expres words of S. *Paul* to *Timothy*, 2 *Epist.* 3 *Chap.* where he tells him that *the holy Scriptures are able to make him wise unto Salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus.* And that *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in Righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thorowly furnished unto all good works.* And their teaching that the Gospel is *obscure*, and difficult to be understood even in things *necessary to be believed* and *practised.* Which, as it makes it greatly inefficacious for the purpose which we have proved it is designed for, so doth it open a gap for vile interpretations of any part of it, and exposeth it to the power of Heretiques, and especially of the *Romish* ones, to make it a mere Nose of Wax: Which none can doubt, that consider also therewith

with their Doctrine of *Implicite Faith*; and that other upon which it is grounded, *viz. That* of the *Infallibility of their Church*: which, as the *Jeſuites* define, is ſeated in the Pope's Chair. But whether it be aſſerted that the Popes have an unerring faculty; or they and their General Councils together, this Doctrine being received (as by them it is without the leaſt ground) for unqueſtionably true, doth greatly hazard, nay and even *neceſſitate* the betraying of men to the very worſt both of opinions and practices, whenſoever this pretended infallible guide ſhall be pleas'd to propoſe them to them. And whoſoever believes it, muſt (to uſe the words of Mr *Chillingworth*) be prepared in mind to eſteem vertue vice, and vice vertue, Chriſtianity Anti-chriſtianiſm, and Anti-chriſtianiſm Chriſtianity, if the Pope ſhall ſo determine. And this Doctrine, without doubt, is that which cauſeth thoſe of the *Papiſts* to ſtick ſo faſt in filthy mire, and to perſiſt ſo obſtinately in their foul errours, who are not detained therein by the love of gain (with which their Popes, and other Eccleſiaſticks by the means of diverſe of them are mightily enriched) or by the dear affection they bear to their other luſts, which they are ſo exactly fit-

ted for the ſatisfaction of. Their Doctrines being very many of them ſo ridiculouſly abſurd, plainly falſe and of ſuch dangerous conſequence; I ſay, nothing elſe, certainly, could hold the ſincerer ſort of *Papiſts* in the belief of them, but this conſideration, that any one of them being let go, their great *Dagon* of the Churches *Infallibility* muſt neceſſarily to the ground with it.

I might alſo inſtance in their Doctrine of the *Diſpenſableneſs of the moſt Solemn Oaths*, which is no leſs deſtructive to *Humane Society*, than it is to *Piety*. And in that of the Popes power to abſolve Subjects from their Allegiance to their lawful Sovereigns: And to them adde a great number of Maximes of the moſt famous order among them, the *Jeſuites*, and Reſolutions of Caſes of Conſcience, which are as wicked and deſtructive of a holy Life, as the Devil himſelf can well deviſe. But to be employed with *Hercules* in emptying the *Augean* ſtable would be as acceptable a work as ſtirring ſo far in this naſty Sink. Whoſoever ſhall peruſe the *Myſtery of Jeſuitiſm*, may find more than enough there to turn his ſtomach, though it ſhould be none of the moſt ſqueamiſh and quezy, and to make him ſtand aſtoniſhed, and bleſs him,

him, that ever ſuch loathſome and abominable ſtuff ſhould come from perſons that derive their name from the Holy *Jeſus*.

But to haſten to the concluſion of this Chapter, the moſt pure and holy Religion of our Saviour hath the *Church of Rome* defiled with as impure and unholy opinions and practices; and hath taken the moſt effectual courſe not only to render it a feeble and inſignificant thing for accompliſhing the Deſign for which it was intended by the Bleſſed Founder of it, but alſo to make it unhappily ſucceſsful in ſerving the directly contrary. The *great Myſtery of Godlineſs* hath ſhe transformed into a grand *Myſtery of Iniquity*; and by that means moſt exceſſively confirmed its profeſſed enemies, the *Jews* and *Mahumetans*, in their enmity againſt it. And for my own part I ſhould not ſtick to ſay, as did *Averroes* (when he obſerved that the Popiſh Chriſtians adored that they ate) *Sit anima mea cum Philoſophis*, *Let my ſoul take its fate with the Philoſophers in the other world*, did I think Chriſtianity to be ſuch a Religion as ſhe makes it. As much as I admire it now, I ſhould then prefer that of *Socrates*, *Plato*, and *Cicero* very far before it. Though I abhor ſo far to imitate the *Papiſts* in the De-

viliſhly cruel uncharitableneſs, as to pronounce them all in a ſtate of damnation, yet I dare aſſert with the greateſt and moſt undoubted confidence, that all that continue in Communion with that degenerated and Apoſtate Church, run infinite hazards: And moreover that it is impoſſible that any *ſincere* perſons ſhould give an *explicite* and *underſtanding aſſent* to *all* her Doctrines: but that whoſoever can find in his heart to *practiſe* upon them, can be nothing better than a ſhamefully debauched and immoral wretch. Nor is it conceivable what ſhould induce any to exchange the *Reformed* for the *Popiſh* Religion (as too many have of late done) that have but a competent underſtanding of both, beſides the deſire of ſerving ſome corrupt intereſt. And we plainly ſee, that the generality of thoſe that turn Apoſtates from the Church of *England* to *that* of *Rome*, are ſuch people as were a Scandal to her, while they continued in her: And that *Atheiſm* and *Popery* are the common Sanctuaries to which the moſt abominably vicious and profane of this Age do betake themſelves.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

The Third Inference.

That theſe two ſorts of Perſons are moſt extremely ſottiſh. 1. *Such as expect to have their ſhare in the Salvation of the Goſpel without true Holineſs,* 2. *Such much more, as encourage themſelves by the Grace of the Goſpel in Unholineſs.*

THirdly, There is nothing we are more aſſured of by what hath been diſcourſed of the *Deſign of Chriſtianity*, than that theſe two ſorts of perſons are guilty of extreme ſottiſhneſs: Namely, *Thoſe that expect to have a ſhare in the Salvation of the Goſpel without true Holineſs:* And much more, *Thoſe that encourage themſelves by the grace of the Goſpel in their Unholineſs.*

Firſt, *Thoſe that expect to have their ſhare in the Salvation of the Goſpel without true Holineſs.* I fear me that ſuch people are not confined within the limits of the *Romiſh* Church; but that a vaſt number of Proteſtants alſo may be deſervedly accuſed upon this account. But by ſo much more

ſottiſh are *theſe* than the *Papiſts*, by how much *better* things *their* Religion teacheth them than the *Papiſts* doth. Though I muſt likewiſe with ſadneſs acknowledge that too many opinions have been unhappily foiſted into it, that give too great encouragement to a careleſs life. But that thoſe which promiſe to themſelves an intereſt in the Salvation purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt, either from their Baptiſm, and partaking of certain Chriſtian priveleges, or from their being of ſuch or ſuch a Sect and Mode of Profeſſors, or from their ſuppoſed Orthodoxy and good belief, and zeal againſt erroneous Doctrines, or from their imagining *Chriſt's* Righteouſneſs *theirs* and applying the Promiſes to themſelves, or from their abſtaining from the groſſer and more ſcandalous ſins, or from their doing ſome externally good actions, and have in the mean time no care to be univerſally obedient, to mortifie every luſt, and to obtain an inward principle of Holineſs; that thoſe, I ſay, which thus do, are guilty of moſt egregious and ſtupid folly, is moſt manifeſt from what hath been diſcourſed of the *Deſign of Chriſtianity*.

For we have ſhewn not only that Reformation of Life from the *practice*, and purification of heart from the *liking* of ſin

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are as plainly as can be aſſerted in the Goſpel to be abſolutely neceſſary to give men a right to the promiſes of it; but alſo that its *Great Salvation* doth even conſiſt in it: that, *Salvation from ſin* is the grand Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, and that *from wrath* is the Reſult of this. I will inſtance in two more Scriptures for the farther proof of this. The Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſaith, *Epheſ.* 2. 5, *&c. Even when we were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins hath he quickened us together with Chriſt, (by grace ye are ſaved) and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in Heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus: That in the ages to come he might ſhew the exceeding Riches of his grace in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus. For by Grace ye are ſaved, through faith,* (or by the means of believing the Goſpel) *and that not of your ſelves, it is the gift of God.* Where, by the *Salvation* which the *Epheſian* Chriſtians are ſaid to have obtained, and in the beſtowing of which upon them the exceeding Riches of God's Grace appeared, is plainly to be underſtood their deliverance from their former Heatheniſh Impieties and ſinful Practices: And ſo is it interpreted by our beſt Expoſitors. Again it is ſaid, *Titus* 3. 5, *Not by works of Righteouſneſs which we have*

ſottiſh are *theſe* than the *Papiſts*, by how much *better* things *their* Religion teacheth them than the *Papiſts* doth. Though I muſt likewiſe with ſadneſs acknowledge that too many opinions have been unhappily foiſted into it, that give too great encouragement to a careleſs life. But that thoſe which promiſe to themſelves an intereſt in the Salvation purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt, either from their Baptiſm, and partaking of certain Chriſtian priveleges, or from their being of ſuch or ſuch a Sect and Mode of Profeſſors, or from their ſuppoſed Orthodoxy and good belief, and zeal againſt erroneous Doctrines, or from their imagining *Chriſt's* Righteouſneſs *theirs* and applying the Promiſes to themſelves, or from their abſtaining from the groſſer and more ſcandalous ſins, or from their doing ſome externally good actions, and have in the mean time no care to be univerſally obedient, to mortifie every luſt, and to obtain an inward principle of Holineſs; that thoſe, I ſay, which thus do, are guilty of moſt egregious and ſtupid folly, is moſt manifeſt from what hath been diſcourſed of the *Deſign of Chriſtianity*.

For we have ſhewn not only that Reformation of Life from the *practice*, and purification of heart from the *liking* of ſin

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are as plainly as can be aſſerted in the Goſpel to be abſolutely neceſſary to give men a right to the promiſes of it; but alſo that its *Great Salvation* doth even conſiſt in it: that, *Salvation from ſin* is the grand Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion, and that *from wrath* is the Reſult of this. I will inſtance in two more Scriptures for the farther proof of this. The Apoſtle S. *Paul* ſaith, *Epheſ.* 2. 5, *&c. Even when we were dead in treſpaſſes and ſins hath he quickened us together with Chriſt, (by grace ye are ſaved) and hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in Heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus: That in the ages to come he might ſhew the exceeding Riches of his grace in his kindneſs towards us through Chriſt Jeſus. For by Grace ye are ſaved, through faith, (*or by the means of believing the Goſpel*) and that not of your ſelves, it is the gift of God.* Where, by the *Salvation* which the *Epheſian* Chriſtians are ſaid to have obtained, and in the beſtowing of which upon them the exceeding Riches of God's Grace appeared, is plainly to be underſtood their deliverance from their former Heatheniſh Impieties and ſinful Practices: And ſo is it interpreted by our beſt Expoſitors. Again it is ſaid, *Titus* 3.5, *Not by works of Righteouſneſs which we have*

done, but according to his mercy he saved us (how saved us? it follows) *by the washing of Regeneration, & Renewing of the holy Ghost.* Our Saviour giveth ease to our Sin-sick Souls by recovering them to health: And his Salvation *first* consisteth in curing our wounds, and *secondarily* in freeing us from the smart occasioned by them. S. *Peter* tells the Christians that *by his stripes they were healed*, 1 *Pet.* 2. 24. It being a quotation out of *Isaiah* 53. 5. *Clemens Alexandrinus* in the second book
Pag. 391. of his *Stromat.* hath this saying to the same purpose, ἡ συγγνώμη δὲ οὐ κατ' ἄφεσιν ἀλλὰ κατ' ἴασιν συνίσταται, *Pardon doth not so much consist in Remission as in Healing*; That is, the pardon of the Gospel doth chiefly discover it self in *curing* men of their sins; in delivering sinners from the *power* of them, rather than from the mere *punishment* due to them. By which words that learned Father declared that he looked upon the *subduing* of sin as a more eminent act of grace, than the bare *forgiveness* of it. Now, would that man be accounted any better than a perfect Ideot, who being sorely hurt should expect from his Chirurgion perfect ease, when he will not permit him to apply any plaister for the healing of his wound? Or that being deadly sick should

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look that his Phyſician ſhould deliver him from his *pain*, when he will not take any courſe he preſcribes for the removal of the *diſtemper* that is the *cauſe* of it? But of far greater folly are all thoſe guilty, who will not be perſwaded to part with their *Sins*, and yet hope for the Salvation of their *Souls*. He that looketh for this, expects that which implyeth a moſt palpable contradiction, and is impoſſible in its own nature to be effected. It hath been fully enough ſhewn that mere deliverance from *miſery*, cannot poſſibly be without deliverance from *ſin*; and, *much* leſs Eternal Bleſſedneſs in the Enjoyment of God.

Secondly, But how exceſſively mad then are thoſe, *which turn the grace of God declared in the Goſpel into wantonneſs*, and take encouragement from the abundant kindneſs and good will therein expreſſed to wretched ſinners, with the more ſecurity and boldneſs to commit ſin? We read of ſuch in the Epiſtle of S. *Jude*; And God knows there are too many ſuch in theſe our days. But ſeeing it is ſo groſly fooliſh a thing for men to hope to be ſaved notwithſtanding their living in the allowance of known ſins, what deſperate *Madneſs* then is it to be imboldened in ungodly practices, by the offers Chriſt makes of par-

pardon and salvation to them. These declare that they look upon the *Design of Christianity* not onely as different from what it hath been demonstrated it is, but also as directly *opposite*, and perfectly *contrary* thereunto. These do not only judge their Saviour to be no friend to holiness, but to be the greatest enemy likewise to it; and a Minister of sin and wickedness. They make him to be the very servant of
1 Joh. 3. 8. the Devil, in stead of coming *to destroy his works*. They make the *Christian* Religion more vile by far than that of *Mahomet*; and such a Religion, as those which have but the least spark of goodness must needs abominate. *Shall we Sin* (saith the Apo-
Rom. 6. stle) *that Grace may abound? God forbid!* Those that think they can magnifie the free-grace of God in Christ by thus doing, or that they may take encouragement from it to continue in sin, do make this grace unworthy of mens acceptance, and no grace at all. Nay they make Almighty God the greatest enemy to Mankind in sending his Son Jesus and his Gospel among us. For *sin* being so apparently the *greatest of evils*, it can be no other than the highest and most significant expression of hatred to us, to encourage us to the commission of it. It is so far from being part of our

our *Chriſtian Liberty*, to be delivered from our obligation to *all* or *any* of the Laws of Righteouſneſs, that ſuch a deliverance would be the moſt Diabolical yoke of Bondage. If any man can be ſo ſilly as to object that of the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 6. 14. *Ye are not under the Law, but under Grace:* Let him give himſelf an anſwer by reading the whole verſe; and then make ill uſe of that paſſage if he can tell how. The words foregoing it in the ſame verſe are theſe: *Sin ſhall not have dominion over you*, and theſe words are a proof of that aſſertion: *For ye are not under the Law, but under Grace*: That is, as if he ſhould ſay, It is the moſt inexcuſeable thing for you to continue under the dominion and power of ſin, becauſe ye are not under the weak and inefficacious Pædagogy of the Law of *Moſes*, but a Diſpenſation of Grace, wherein there is not only *Forgiveneſs* aſſured to truly Repenting ſinners, but *ſtrength* afforded to enable to the ſubduing and mortification of all ſin. Our Saviour hath told us expreſly that he came not *to deſtroy the Law*, (that is the *Moral* Law) *but to fulfil it*: And that *Heaven and Earth ſhall ſooner paſs away, than that one jot or tittle thereof ſhall fail.* And it is abſolutely impoſſible, that our obligation there- Mat. 5.

thereunto should cease, while we continue *Men*. All the duties therein contained being most necessary and natural results from the Relation we stand in *to God* and *to one another*, and from the Original *make* and *constitution* of humane souls.

But it is too great an honour to the Doctrine of *Libertinism* to bestow two words upon its confutation, it being so prodigiously monstrous, that it would be almost a breach of Charity to judge that Professour of Christianity not to have suffered the loss of his wits that hath entertained it, or hath the least favour for it; supposing he hath but the least smattering in the Christian Religion. It is a most amazing thing, that such a thought should have any admission into the mind of such a one, while he is *compos mentis*, and not utterly deprived of his Intellectuals: Our Saviour's Gospel being wholly levelled at the mark of killing all sorts of sin in us, and rendering us exactly obedient to the *Divine Moral*, and also all *innocent humane* Laws. Let me speak to such as so shamefully abuse our incomparable Religion, as to take liberty from thence to be in any kind immoral, in the words of S. *Paul*, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. *Despisest thou the Riches of God's goodness and forbearance and long-suffering*,

ſuffering, not knowing that his goodneſs leadeth thee (or deſigneth the leading of thee) *to Repentance? But after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart treaſureſt up to thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and Revelation of the Righteous Judgment of God, &c.*

CHAP. XIX.

The Fourth Inference.

That a right underſtanding of the Deſign of Chriſtianity *will give ſatisfaction concerning the true* Notion, 1. *Of Juſtifying Faith,* 2. *Of the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs.*

FOurthly, From what hath been ſaid of the *Deſign of Chriſtianity* may be clearly inferred the *True notion of Juſtifying Faith*, and of *the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs.*

Firſt, *Of Juſtifying Faith.* We thence learn, *That it is ſuch a belief of the Truth of the Goſpel, as includes a ſincere reſolution of Obedience unto all its Precepts*; or (which is the ſame thing) includes *true Holineſs* in the nature of it: And moreover that it juſti-

justifieth *as* it doth so. For surely the *Faith* which intitles a sinner to so high a privelege as that of *justification*, must needs be such as complieth with *all* the purposes of Christ's coming into the world, and *especially* with his *grand* purpose; and it is no less necessary that it should justifie *as* it doth this; That is, as it receives Christ for a *Lord*, as well as for a *Saviour*. But I need not now distinguish between these two, there being but a *notional* difference between them in this matter. For Christ (as was shewn) as he is a *Saviour*, designeth our *Holiness*: his *Salvation* being *chiefly* that from the worst of evils, *sin*; and *principally* consisting in deliverance from the *power* of it.

I scarcely more admired at any thing in my whole life, than that any worthy men especially should be so difficultly perswaded to embrace this account of *Justifying Faith*; and should perplex and make intricate so very plain a Doctrine. If this be not to seek knots in a Bulrush, I know not what is. I wish there were nothing throughout the Bible less easily intelligible than this is, and I should then dare to pronounce it one of the plainest of all books that ever pen wrote. For seeing the great end of the Gospel is to make men good,

good, what pretence can there be for thinking, that *Faith* is the *Condition* (or I'le uſe the word [*Inſtrument*] as improper and obſcure as it is) *of Juſtification*, as it complieth with only the precept of *relying on Chriſt's Merits* for the obtaining of it: eſpecially when it is no leſs manifeſt than the Sun at Noon-day, that obedience to the *other precepts* muſt go before obedience to *this*; and that a man may not rely on the merits of Chriſt for the forgiveneſs of his ſins, and he is moſt preſumptuous in ſo doing, and puts an affront upon his Saviour too, till he be ſincerely willing to be reformed from them: And beſides ſuch a *Relyance* is ordinarily to be found among unregenerate, and even the very worſt of men. And therefore how can it be otherwiſe, than that *that act of faith* muſt needs have a hand in *juſtifying*, and the *ſpecial* hand too, which diſtinguiſheth it from that which is to be found in ſuch perſons. And I adde, what good ground can men have for this fancy, when as our Saviour hath merited the pardon of ſin, for this end, that it might be an effectual motive to return from it. And can any thing in the world be more indiſputably clear, than, if the only *direct* ſcope that Chriſtianity drives at be the ſubduing

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of sin in us, and our freedom from its guilt or obligation to punishment be the consequent of this (as I think hath been demonstrated with abundant evidence;) that faith invests us with a title to this deliverance no otherwise than as *dying to sin* and so consequently *living to God* are the products and fruit of it? And seeing that, one End, and the Ultimate End too of Christ's coming was to turn us from our iniquities, if the nature of *Faith* considered as *Justifying* must needs be made wholly to consist in *Recumbence* and *Reliance on him*, he shall be my *Apollo* that can give me a sufficient reason why it ought only to consist in *Reliance on the Merits of Christ* for the *pardon* of sin, and not also in his *power* for the *Mortification of it*. In short, Is it possible that faith in Christ's blood for the forgiveness of sin should be the onely act which justifieth a sinner, when such a multitude of plain Texts assure us, that he died also to make us *holy*, and that his death was designed to deliver us from dying in order to a farther end, namely to this, that we should *live unto him who died for us*.

I will never trust my discursive Faculty so long as I live, no not in the plainest and most undoubted cases, if I am mistaken here.

here. And will take the boldneſs to tell thoſe who are diſpleaſed with this account of *Juſtifying Faith*, that (in my opinion) it is impoſſible they ſhould once think of any other, if they did as ſeriouſly weigh and throughly conſider the *Deſign of Chriſtianity* as they ought to do. I the more inſiſt upon this, becauſe thoſe perſons explication of this point hath been greatly lyable to be uſed to ill purpoſes by inſincere perſons; and hath given infinite advantage to the dangerous errour of *Antinomianiſm*. And for my part I muſt confeſs that I would not willingly be he that ſhould undertake to encounter one of the champions of that *foul* cauſe, with the admiſſion of this principle, *That faith juſtifieth, onely as it apprehendeth the merits and righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt*: I muſt certainly have great *luck*, or my adverſary but little cunning, if I were not forced to repent me of ſuch an Engagement.

Secondly, And as for the other Doctrine of *the Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs*; we learn from *the Deſign of Chriſtianity* that this is the true explication of it: Namely, That it conſiſts in dealing with *ſincerely* righteous perſons, as if they were *perfectly* ſo, for the ſake and upon

on the account of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs. The *grand* intent of the Goſpel being to make us partakers of an *Inward* and *Real* Righteouſneſs, and it being but a *ſecondary* one that we ſhould be *accepted* and rewarded as if we were *completely* righteous; it is not poſſible that any other notion of this Doctrine ſhould have truth in it. For as from thence it appeareth, that there can be no ſuch Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs offered in the Goſpel, as ſerveth to make men remiſs in their proſecution of an Inward Righteouſneſs; So is it manifeſt likewiſe, That that Doctrine is deſigned for a motive to quicken and excite men in their endeavours after ſuch a Righteouſneſs as this is. So far is it, from tending to cauſe in us an undervaluing and ſleight eſteem of it, that, as ſure as that the Ultimate deſign of Chriſtianity is to indue us with it, it muſt be intended for no other purpoſe but to farther and promote that buſineſs: And it is effectual thereunto in that manner, that we ſhewed the exceeding great and precious *Promiſes* of the Goſpel are.

But becauſe both theſe points are diſcuſſed in the *Free Diſcourſe*, I have ſaid ſo little of the *former*, and will proceed no farther on *this*: but refer the Reader thither,

ther, and to other much more elaborate Discourses for his fuller satisfaction. And indeed it was enough for me in this place to shew, That the notion laid down in that Book of both these Doctrines, doth evidently follow from that Proposition which is the Subject of this Treatise.

CHAP. XX.

The Fifth Inference.

That we Learn from the Design of Christianity *the Great Measure and Standard whereby we are to judge of Doctrines. How we are to judge of the* Truth *of Doctrines.*

Fifthly, we learn from what hath been said of the *Design of Christianity*, what is the *Great measure and standard whereby we are to judge of Doctrines*; *both whether they are true or false, and in what degree necessary to be received or rejected.*

First, we understand how to judge of the *Truth* of Doctrines. We may be certain that, seeing the *Design of Christianity is to make men holy*, whatsoever opinions do either *directly* or in their *evident conse-*

quences obstruct the promoting of it, are perfectly false; and with as great peremptoriness and confidence as they may be by some that call themselves Christians obtruded upon us, they are not of Christ, nor any part of his Religion. And those which do *appear* to us to discourage from serious endeavours after piety and true vertue, we ought for that reason, while we have such an opinion of them, most vehemently to *suspect* them to be erroneous. For it being the business of our Saviour's coming into the world, and of his blessed Gospel, effectually to perswade us to use our utmost diligence in subduing our lusts, and qualifying our Souls by purity and holiness for the enjoyment of God, and to make our endeavours *successful* for that purpose; we may be undoubtedly assured that he hath not either by himself immediately, or by his Apostles delivered any thing that opposeth this Design. If (saith S. *Paul*) *I build again the things that I destroyed, I make my self a Transgressor*: And no man that hath in him the least of a Christian, will once suspect, that the perfectly *wise* as well as *holy* Jesus should so manage the business he hath undertaken, as what he builds with one hand, to pull down with the other; and frustrate that

Gal. 2.

Design

Deſign by *ſome* Doctrines which he promoteth by *others*.

Thoſe Doctrines on the other hand which in their own nature do evidently tend to the ſerving of this Deſign of Chriſtianity, we may conclude are moſt true and genuine: And thoſe which, upon our ſerious conſidering of them, we are perſwaded do ſo, we ought upon that account to have a kindneſs for them, and to believe them of an higher than *humane* Original. And therefore thoſe which give the moſt honourable accounts of God, his nature, and dealing with the ſons of men; that moſt magnifie his grace, and beſt vindicate his Holineſs, Juſtice, and Goodneſs; do commend themſelves to our belief with infinite advantage: Becauſe the *moſt worthy* conceptions of the Deity are extremely *helpful* and likewiſe *neceſſary* to the loving of God, and ſerving him as becometh us, and have a mighty influence into the ordering and regulation of our whole man; as might be largly ſhewn.

Thoſe Doctrines, again, that moſt diſcountenance all ſins both againſt the firſt and ſecond Table, and beſt enable to anſwer all pleas and pretences for ſecurity and careleſsneſs; that are moſt highly agreeable to the innate Dictates of our

minds, and least gratifie and please our carnal part; we may from the consideration of the *Design of Christianity* be greatly perswaded of the *Truth* of them.

And on the Contrary, Those which are apt to instil into mens minds any unlovely notions of the Divine Nature, that disparage his Holiness, or lessen his kindness and good will to his Creation, and the obligations of the generality of the world to him and his Son Jesus, and so make his grace a narrow and scanty thing, or that naturally cast any dishonorable reflections on any person of the most holy Trinity; must needs be *false*. As also those that make Religion to be a mere *Passive* thing, wholly *God's work*, and not at all *ours*; or that cramp men, and perswade them that they are utterly void of the least ability to co-operate with the grace of God or to do any thing towards their own salvation; or any way whatsoever discourage them from the diligent prosecution of Holiness; or deprive us of any help afforded us towards our gaining, and growth in grace, either by putting a slur upon the written word, in advancing above it the *light within men*, and in *Enthusiastical* pretences to immediate Revelations, &c. Or else by teaching men to

sleight

ſleight any one Ordinance of the Goſpel, &c. Or ſuch Doctrines as tend to introduce confuſion into the Church of Chriſt, and to deprive it of all Government and Order, or in ſhort that give countenance to any Immorality whatſoever: I ſay, as ſure as the Chriſtian Religion is true, and that what we have proved to be the Deſign thereof, is ſo; ſuch Doctrines as theſe muſt needs be *falſe*.

What our Saviour ſaith of falſe Prophets, is as true of moſt Doctrines, *By their fruits you ſhall know them:* we may underſtand whether they have any relation to Chriſtianity or no, by the Deſign they drive at, and their evident conſequences.

And I may adde, that we may make a ſhrewd gueſs what thoſe *particular wayes and modes of Religion* are (which the various Sects we are cantonized into have eſpouſed to themſelves, and are ſo fond of) by the proper and moſt diſtinguiſhing effects of them. If we perceive that they make the great ſticklers for them, to differ from others chiefly in unconcernednes about the moſt important & ſubſtantial duties of *Morality*, and in laying the greateſt weight upon certain little Trifles, and placing their Religion in mere *externals*;

or that the things whereby they are most peculiarly discriminated from other folk are spiritual pride, and fond conceitedness of themselves, and a scornful and fierce behaviour towards those that approve not of their way; uncharitableness, morosity, and peevishness; a seditious, ungovernable and untameable spirit, &c. I say, if we observe such as these to be the most distinguishing effects of their several Modes and Forms, we have sufficient reason from thence alone greatly to presume that they have not the stamp of *Jus Christianum* upon them, that they are not of Christ, but of their own invention. The wisdom that is from above is quite another thing, and begets perfectly other kind of effects; as shall be shewn hereafter.

But to return, *The Design of the Gospel* is (as was said) the Great Standard by which we are to judge of the *Truth* of Opinions: Those that *seem* to us to oppose this Design, we are bound to *suspect*, because they do so; but those which *apparently* do this, we must with heartiest indignation reject. And though we should meet with some places of Scripture that at first sight may seem to favour them, we may not be stumbled upon that account, but

but be confident that whatsoever is their true meaning, as sure as they have God for their Author, they cannot possibly patronize any such Doctrines.

And, lastly, in examining which of two opinions is true, that oppose each other, and do seem to be much a like befriended by the holy Scriptures; it is doubtless a very safe course to consider as impartially as we can, which doth tend most to serve the great End of Christianity, and to prefer that which we are perswaded doth so.

CHAP. XXI.

How we are to judge of the Necessity *of Doctrines either to be embraced or rejected. A brief discourse of the Nature of Points* Fundamental. *How we may know whether we embrace all such, and whether we hold not any destructive and damnable Errours.*

SEcondly, *The Design of Christianity is the great measure* whereby we are to judge as of the *Truth*, so also of the *Necessity of Doctrines either to be embraced or rejected.*

First,

First, We may thereby understand, in what degree we ought to esteem those *Necessary to be by all received*, which we our selves are convinc'd of the *Truth* of; or, which of such are *Fundamental Points* of the Christian Faith, and which not.

First, It is plain, That in the general those and those only are *primarily* and in their own nature *Fundamentals*, which are absolutely necessary to accomplish in us that Design. Such, as without the knowledge and belief of which it is impossible to acquire that Inward Righteousness and true Holiness which the Christian Religion aimeth at the introduction of. It is in it self absolutely necessary, not to be ignorant of or disbelieve any of those Points, upon which the effecting of the great business of the Gospel in us doth necessarily depend. The particulars of these I shall not stand to enumerate, because (as will appear from what will be said anon) it is not needful to have a just Table of them: And besides, any one that understands wherein the nature of *true Holiness* lyeth, may be able sufficiently to inform himself what they are.

Secondly, It is as evident, That those points of Faith are *secondarily Fundamental*,

tal, the diſbelief of which cannot conſiſt with true Holineſs, in thoſe to whom the Goſpel is ſufficiently made known; although they are not in their own nature ſuch, as that Holineſs is not in ſome degree or other attainable without the belief of them. And in the number of theſe are all ſuch Doctrines as are with indiſputable clearneſs revealed to us. Now the belief of theſe, though it is not in it ſelf any more than in higher or lower degrees profitable, yet is it even abſolutely neceſſary from an external cauſe, though not from the nature of the Points themſelves, *viz.* In regard of their being delivered with ſuch abundant perſpicuity, as that nothing can cauſe men to refuſe to admit them, but that which argueth them to be ſtark naught, and to have ſome unworthy and baſe end in ſo doing. But we muſt take notice here, that all ſuch Points as theſe are not of equal neceſſity to be received by all Chriſtians; becauſe that in regard of the diverſity of their capacities, educations, and other means and advantages, ſome of them may be moſt plainly perceived by ſome to be delivered in the Scriptures, which cannot be ſo by others with the like eaſe.

And in the ſecond place, what hath been

been said of *Fundamental Truths*, is applicable by the Rule of Contraries to the opposite *Errours*, as I need not shew.

Now then, would we know whether we embrace *all the Fundamentals* of Christianity, and are guilty of no damnable and destructive errours; among the great diversity and contrariety of Opinions that this kingdom abounds with (I think I may say) above all other parts of Christendom; our onely way is to examine our selves impartially after this manner.

Am I sincerely willing to obey my Creatour and Redeemer in all things commanded by them? Do I entertain and harbour no lust in my breast? Do I heartily endeavour to have a right understanding of the holy Scriptures, and chiefly of the Gospel, and to know what Doctrines are delivered there in order to the bettering of my soul by them, and the direction of my life and actions according to them?

If we can answer these Questions in the affirmative; whatsoever *mistakes* we may labour under, they can be none of them such as will undo our souls; because we shall have cause to conclude from thence, that the *Design of Christianity* is in some good measure effected in us. And whatsoever

ſoever Tenets may be accompanied and conſiſt with the true Love of God, and a ſolicitous care to keep a conſcience void of offence towards him and men, we may be certain from the paſt Diſcourſe of the *Deſign of the Goſpel*, that they belong not to the Catalogue of *Fundamental Errours*. This obedient temper is the moſt infallible mark (of any I know) of an *Orthodox* man; He that is indued with it, though he may *erre*, cannot be an *Heretique*.

But there will be an occaſion of ſpeaking more anon to this purpoſe.

CHAP. XXII.

The Sixth Inference.

That the Deſign of Chriſtianity *teacheth us what Doctrines and Practices we ought, as Chriſtians, to be moſt Zealous for or againſt.*

SIxthly, We conſequently learn *what Doctrines and Practices we ought, as Chriſtians, to be moſt zealous for or againſt.* Thoſe, ſurely, that are moſt available to the begetting and encreaſe of true holineſs, it is our duty to concern our ſelves moſt

moſt for the defence of: And thoſe which have the greateſt tendency towards the endangering of it, to ſet our ſelves with the greateſt induſtry and vigour againſt. The reaſon is plain, becauſe the *former* do moſt promote the Deſign of the Goſpel, and the *latter* do it moſt diſſervice. S. *Jude* exhorts in the third verſe of his Epiſtle, *to contend earneſtly* for the Faith *which was once delivered to the Saints*; that holy Doctrine which was firſt delivered by our Saviour, and unanimouſly by his Apoſtles after him; which is perfectly contrary to the wicked and abominable Doctrines taught by the profane crew he ſpeaks of in the next verſe (and were more than probably the *Gnoſticks*) which *were crept in unawares, who were before ordained to this condemnation* (or whoſe *Impoſtures* firſt, and then the *vengeance* which ſhould be taken of them, were *formerly written of* or *foretold* both by Chriſt and his Apoſtles) *ungodly men, turning the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And we ought to contend againſt whatſoever is deſigned to overthrow and make ineffectual that moſt bleſſed Doctrine, more or leſs, according as it more or leſs tends ſo to do. Our

zeal

zeal should be altogether employed for the promoting of *personal* and *real Holiness*, and mostly for the *Essential* parts of it, and the *Necessary* means and helps to it. But doubtless it cannot be worth our while to lay out any considerable matter of our heat, either for or against *Doubtful Opinions*, *Alterable Modes*, *Rites* and *Circumstances of Religion*: They are not things on which much weight may be warrantably laid; for they are too weak to bear it, in regard of their being so little serviceable or disserviceable to the *Design of Christianity*, as 'tis plain they are. I say, eager defending or opposing of such kind of things, is (to use the similitude of an excellent person) like the Apes blowing at a Glow-worm which affords neither light nor warmth. Nay it is no less *injurious* to the *Design of Christianity*, than unserviceable and useless, as we have been effectually taught by very woful experience. And nothing doth more harden Atheistically-disposed persons, than their observing the contention of Christians about matters of that nature; for thereby do they take a measure of our whole Religion. And besides an eager concernedness about them is too ordinarily accompanied with a lukewarm or rather frozen

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indifference concerning the most *important* Points and the *Indispensables* of Christianity. It is too visibly apparent to be denied, That those which have such a *scalding hot* zeal either for or against things of *no certainty* and *no necessity*, are many of them (as their predecessors the *Pharisees* were) in the very *other* extreme as to not a few of the *weightyest* matters of Religion.

CHAP. XXIII.

The Seventh Inference.

That the Design of Christianity *well considered will give us great light into the just Bounds and Extent of Christian Liberty. Of complying with the Customes of our Country, and the will of our Governours. The Great difference between the* Mosaical *Law and the* Gospel *as to its Preceptive part.*

SEventhly, we may be greatly satisfied by considering the *Design of Christianity* concerning the *just bounds and extent of our Christian Liberty*. For that being to make men *holy*, it may safely be presumed that

that such things as have neither directly nor consequentially any tendency to the depraving of our Souls, are left free to us by our Saviour, either to do them or not to do them, as we shall see cause. Whatsoever doth neither promote nor hinder *this Design*, we have reason to believe is neither injoyn'd upon us Christians, nor forbidden to us.

Whatever things are any way *necessary* to the furtherance of it, must needs be matter of strict duty; and what are so profitable thereunto, that the Omission of them doth make the effecting of this Design more difficult, cannot but be *ordinarily* so also. Whatsoever is *in its own nature*, or by reason of some *Circumstance inseparably adhering to it*, a *necessary* occasion of gratifying some one or other corrupt affection, and *that*, by the doing of wch we shall *certainly defile* our own Souls or the Souls of others, either by drawing them thereby *to*, or hardening and encouraging them *in* any wickedness (which is that our Saviour means by *offending* or *scandalizing little ones*, and is so severely forbidden by him, and also by the Apostle in the eighth chapter of the first epistle to the *Corinthians*) can be no other than absolutely unlawful: And whatsoever is

foreseen to be a *probable* occasion of any one of these mischiefs, must also be carefully avoided by us. But those things which are none of all these, cannot be otherwise than perfectly *indifferent* under the Gospel.

And therefore whatsoever of such are commended by the Custome of the places we live in, or Commanded by Superiors, or made by any Circumstance convenient to be done; our Christian liberty consists in this that we have leave to do them. And, indeed, it is so far from being a sin to comply with our Country-men and Neighbours in their plainly innocent usages and harmless Customes, or with the will of our Governours when they command us such things; that it would be so, to refuse so to do. For our refusing to comply with either of these can hardly proceed from any thing better than a proud affectation of singularity, or at best from superstitious scrupulosity; which, in calling it *Superstitious*, I intimate to be very evil, as much of Conscience as there may be in it. For *Superstition* implyeth a frightful and overtimorous apprehension of the Divine Nature, and consequently a base and undervaluing conception of it, as the *Greek* word that expresseth it [Δεισιδαιμονία] signifieth.

eth. That which makes men *Superstitious*, is such an opinion of God as represents him a very Angry and Captious Being, but yet such a one too as may be atoned and pacified by a great care and exactness in certain little matters, in performances and abstinences of an insignificant and very trivial nature.

Now the Ancient Author of the Epistle to *Diognetus* therein acquaints him, that the *Primitive Christians* were no such squeamish or conceited Creatures as to live in a different way from the people among whom they inhabited; and saith that they distinguish'd themselves from their Neighbors and other folk οὔτε φωνῇ, οὔτε ἔθεσι *neither by civil customes, nor a certain language,* (or phrases or *tone*) *proper to themselves,* οὐδὲ βίου παράσημον ἀσκοῦσιν, &c. *nor that they affected to make themselves notified by any peculiarities* (that is, in harmless matters) as a foolish Sect among our selves, and some other fanciful people, now a-days do.

I design not here so tedious a work as that of examining particulars by the Rule we have given, but only to shew in the general that we may be satisfied concerning the *Extent of our Christian Liberty* by well weighing the *Design of Christianity*,

and may underſtand what kind of things muſt needs be free to us under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, and what not; leaving it to the Reader to make application, and conſider the nature of particulars by comparing them with this Rule. But I preſume I need not mind him, that I ſuppoſe all this while that whatſoever is plainly commanded and forbidden in the Goſpel, muſt be done and forborn by him, though he ſhould not be ſagacious enough to diſcern how every thing there commanded is ſerviceable, or forbidden is injurious, to the Deſign of Holineſs: For ſurely none can doubt but that they ought to underſtand me, in what I have aſſerted, to have this meaning onely, *viz.* That, as to thoſe things which the Goſpel ſpeaketh nothing in particular and clearly concerning, the beſt courſe we can take in order to our knowing to what Heads to refer them (whether to that of things *commanded*, or to that of *forbidden*, or to that of *Indifferent* things) is to examine them by this General Rule, *viz.* *the Deſign of Chriſtianity.*

But to conclude this, The great difference between the *Moſaical* Law, and the *Goſpel*, as to its preceptive part, is this, That by the *former* a vaſt multitude of

of perfectly *Indifferent* things were impoſed, and many ſuch alſo prohibited: But by the *latter*, onely thoſe things are injoyned that are in their own nature of indiſpenſable neceſſity, or ſuch as are means and helps towards them: And there is nothing thereby forbidden, but it is ſo, becauſe it is evil; and is not therefore evil onely becauſe forbidden. There is nothing either commanded or forbidden in our Saviour's Religion, but, as it is in order to our good, ſo is it in order to *ſuch* a good too as conſiſts in the Reformation and Renovation of our lives and natures.

So that, I ſay, our paſt Diſcourſe concerning *the Deſign of Chriſtianity* may give us great light, as to the knowledge of what kind of things, we that are under the Goſpel-diſpenſation, *muſt do*, and are matter of *neceſſary* duty; *muſt not do*, and are matter of ſin; and *may do* or *leave undone* without ſin.

CHAP. XXIV.

The Eighth Inference.

That it is the moſt unaccountable thing to do that which is Eſſentially Evil, in defence of the Chriſtian Religion, or of any opinions preſumed to be Doctrines relating thereunto. The Pope and Church of Rome *moſt prodigiouſly guilty in this particular. And not a few of thoſe that profeſs Enmity againſt Popery too lyable alſo to the ſame charge.*

EIghthly, It may be plainly inferred from what hath been ſaid of the *Deſign of Chriſtianity*, *That it is the moſt ſtrangely unaccountable thing for men in defence or favour of that way of Religion, which they take to be moſt truly the Chriſtian, or of any opinions that are preſumed by them to be Doctrines thereunto belonging, to do that which is eſſentially and in its own nature evil.* For theſe act quite contrary to *the Deſign of the Chriſtian Religion*, and ſo conſequently, do what lyeth in them to ſpoil it, and render it a vain and inſignificant thing by the courſe they take for

for the advancement of it. The *Pope* and *Church of Rome* are most prodigiously guilty of this madness; they doing the most plainly vicious and immoral actions imaginable to promote the Interest (as they pretend) of that which they call *the Catholique Faith.* For, their imposing of their own sences upon the Word of God, and then Persecuting, Burning and Damning men for not subscribing to *theirs* as to *God's* words, can be no better than an Act of Devilish pride and barbarous cruelty. It is so of the former, in that it is a compelling men to acknowledge their *wisdom* to be such as that it may not be suspected in the least measure, no not in the determination of points that are the most doubtful and disputable: Nay neither in such Opinions and Practices of theirs as most apparently contradict a multitude of Texts of the holy Scriptures.

And moreover in endeavouring to force all men to act and think as they do in matters of Religion, they with *Luciferian* arrogance usurp the Empire of Almighty God, and sway that Scepter over mens consciences which is his peculiarly.

And I need not say that they are therein no whit less *cruel* than they are *proud.*

For what greater cruelty can there be, than to inflict upon people the saddest of calamities and the horridest tortures (whereof the instances are innumerable) for such things as they cannot have the least cause to think they are able to help; and which they have also the greatest reason to conclude they are not at all blame worthy for? I say what can be greater cruelty than this is? except their designing thereby to terrifie men to the owning of Doctrines and doing actions perfectly against the cleerest sense of their minds and expressest Dictates of their Consciences; which is an exercise of no less cruelty towards their *Souls*, than the other is towards their *Bodies*.

And what Villanies are there which the Pope and his Proselytes have stuck at committing for the Propagation of their Religion? Such as exciting subjects to take arms against their lawful Sovereigns, to whom they are obliged in the bonds of most Solemn Oaths; Poisoning and Stabbing of Princes, the most barbarous Massacres that any History can give account of. In short, what Frauds and Perfidiousness, what Treachery, what Impostures, what Perjuries, what Cruelties and horrid out-rages have they thought too

too wicked to be undertaken and perſiſted in for the ſake of HOLY CHURCH?

But I would I could ſay that of all that are called Chriſtians the *Papiſts* onely are lyable to this charge; but, alas, it is too manifeſt to be denied or yet diſſembled, that not a few of thoſe that profeſs enmity to Popery are ſadly guilty, though not *equally* with the *Papiſts*, in this particular. But there is nothing more certain than that for any of us to be cruel and of a perſecuting ſpirit, to be wrathful and furious, to backbite and ſlander, to be falſe and perfidious, to be ungovernable, rebellious, or ſeditious, to be uncharitable or in any kind whatſoever unjuſt upon the account of Religion it ſelf, is moſt unſufferable and inexcuſeable. For if it be lawful to behave our ſelves after this manner upon any account whatever, Religion would be the moſt uſeleſs thing in the whole world; and if this were lawful upon the account of Religion onely, I will not ſtick to ſay that it would not be more uſeleſs and unprofitable than miſchievous and hurtfull. Nor would the *Chriſtian Religion* it ſelf be worthy our profeſſion, if it would give us leave, upon any deſign, to allow our ſelves in the forementioned

ed Immoralities or in any one whatſoever.

But there are none, it more abſolutely or with greater ſeverity forbiddeth than ſuch as theſe. *Who is a wiſe man and indued with knowledge among you* (ſaith S. *James*) *Let him ſhew out of a good converſation his works with meekneſs of wiſdom; but if ye have bitter envyings and ſtrife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not againſt the truth*, (that is, do not boaſt of your Chriſtian wiſdom, nor play the Hypocrites in pretending to be Spiritual) *this wiſdom deſcendeth not from above* (is not zeal kindled from heaven) *but is earthly, ſenſual, Deviliſh: For where envy and ſtrife is, there is confuſion and every evil work. But the wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without Partiality, and without Hypocriſie: And the fruit of righteouſneſs is ſown in peace, of them that make peace*, *James* 3. 13. to the end.

And S. *Paul* tells the *Galatians*, Chap. 4. 22, 23. That *the Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance.* And he reckoneth among the works of the fleſh, *verſ.* 19, 20, 21. not onely *Adultery*,

tery, *Fornication*, *Uncleanneſs*, *Laſciviouſneſs*, *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Hereſies*, *Murthers*, *Drunkenneſs*, *Revelling*: but alſo *Hatred*, *Variance*, *Emulations*, *Wrath*, *Strife*, *Seditions*, *Envyings*: and ſaith, that *they which do ſuch things* (ſuch as *theſe* as well as the *former*) *ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God.* And adds *verſ.* 24. that *They which are Chriſt's*, *have Crucified the fleſh with the affections and luſts*, that is, all ſuch as the foregoing.

And it appeareth from what hath been diſcourſed concerning the *Deſign of Chriſtianity*, that the gratification of any of theſe affections is ſo far from becoming lawful or more warrantable by being yielded to for the ſake of it, that it is rendered the more wretchedly fooliſh and unaccountable by this means. For thus to do, is no other than to be *irreligious* to promote *Religion*, to be *Un-chriſtian* to do ſervice to *Chriſtianity*; and therefore to go the directeſt way to *deſtroy it*, by the means we uſe for its *preſervation*: And we do our particular Opinions and Forms of Religion more Miſchief in alienating the minds of others from them, than their moſt Profeſſed Adverſaries will be able to do by all their Attempts againſt them, by ſuch wild and wicked expreſſions of zeal for

for them. And lastly, thus to do is to oppose the interest of our *Religion* to that of our *Souls*, and to cast *these* away in the defence of *that*: As appears from our Discourse in the second Section. But what Madness is like to this?

CHAP. XXV.

The Ninth Inference.

That it is a most unwarrantable thing for those that are the Ministers of Christ to prefer any other Design before that of making men really Righteous and Holy. That this ought to be the whole Design of their Preaching. That it is of as great concernment that they promote the same Business by their Conversations, as that they do it by their Doctrine. Infinite Mischiefs occasioned by the loose Lives of Ministers. Several Instances of Practices extremely blame-worthy in Preachers of the Gospel. That they ought to have a regard to the Weaknesses of Persons so far as lawfully they may. That the Promoting of Holiness *ought to be the onely Design of Ecclesiastical Discipline.*

Ninthly,

NInthly, Seeing our Saviour's *grand and onely direct Deſign was to make men really Righteous and Holy, it muſt needs be a moſt unwarrantable thing for thoſe that are his Miniſters and Repreſentatives to prefer any other before this; for thoſe that are intruſted with the care of ſouls to concern themſelves about* any *thing ſo much as* this.

It is plainly their Duty to ſubordinate every thing they do, by virtue of their Sacred Function, hereunto; and to imitate their Great Maſter, all they can, in the diſcharge of it; to promote *Holineſs*, as much as lyeth in them, both by their Doctrine and Converſations: with all perſpicuity and plainneſs to inſtruct their People in all the indiſputable Doctrines of Chriſtianity above any other; and to have a ſpecial care to ſhew them the aptneſs that is in them, to the furtherance of Holineſs of Heart and Life: And moſt to inculcate thoſe upon them which have the greateſt and moſt manifeſt and immediate tendency thereunto: to inform them of their whole duty relating to God, their Neighbour and themſelves impartially; to preſs them to the performance of them with the greateſt affection and fervency; and to back on their Exhortations with the

the most prevalent and inforcing Motives; the most rational and convincing Arguments; couragiously, but with a discovery of tendrest compassion to sinners, to reprove all sins without exception; and faithfully to shew the danger of living in any one whatsoever. And to do thus, not onely in *publique*, but, as there is occasion, in *private* also, and readily to embrace all opportunities for that purpose.

Thus (as hath been shewn) did our Blessed *Saviour* spend his time, and that it is the duty of his Ministers to come as near as they can, in their practice, to him, is out of question: And thus also did his immediate Successors, the Apostles employ themselves; as might be largly made to appear. They preach'd the Word, were *instant both in season and out of season, they reproved, rebuked and exhorted with all long-suffering and Doctrine*; according as S. *Paul* charged *Timothy* to do, in the most solemn and severe manner: even *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his Kingdom.* And that charge by parity of reason must concern the whole Clergy as well as that Bishop.

And

And as Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught men by their *Lives*, as well as *Doctrine*, and encouraged them to the performance of whatſoever duties they injoyned them, by their own Example; ſo it cannot but be of infinite concernment that all that have the conduct of Souls committed to them ſhould do the like. S. *Paul* exhorted *Timothy* firſt *to take heed to himſelf*, and then *to the Doctrine*; and the former advice was of no whit leſs neceſſity and importance than was the latter. For (as woful experience aſſureth us) a Miniſter of a careleſs and looſe life, let his parts and ability in preaching be never ſo great, nay though he ſhould behave himſelf never ſo faithfully in the Pulpit, and be zealous againſt the very vices he himſelf is guilty of (which would be very ſtrange if he ſhould) muſt needs do more *hurt* incomparably, than he can do *good*. And though (as ſome of them will tell them) it is the Peoples duty to do as they *ſay*, and not as they *do*; yet is there nothing more impoſſible than to teach them effectually that Leſſon. Mankind (as we had before occaſion to ſhew) is mightily addicted to imitation, and *Examples* (eſpecially thoſe of Governors and Teachers) have a greater force

1 Tim. 4. 16.

force upon people ordinarily than have *Instructions*; but chiefly *bad Examples* (in regard of their natural proneneſs to vice) than *good Instructions*. Had not the Apoſtles expreſſed as great a care of what they *did*, as of what they *ſaid*, how they *lived* as how they *preached*, Chriſtianity would (without doubt) have been ſo far from prevailing and getting ground as it hath done; that it could not have long ſurvived its Bleſſed Author, if it had not bid *adieu* to the world with him: Moſt men, do what we can, will judge of our Sermons by our Converſations, and if they ſee *theſe* bad, they will not think *thoſe* good; nor the Doctrines contained in them practicable, ſeeing they have no better effect upon thoſe that preach them. And beſides no man will be thought to be ſerious and in good earneſt in preſſing thoſe duties upon others, which he makes no conſcience of performing himſelf.

Nay every man's judgement in Divine things may warrantably be ſuſpected, that is of a wicked and vicious Life. And thoſe that are conſcious to themſelves that they are not able to paſs a judgement upon Doctrines, may not be blamed if they queſtion their Miniſter's Ortho-

Orthodoxy, while they obſerve in him any kind of Immorality, and ſee that he lives to the ſatisfaction of any one Luſt. For, the promiſe of *knowing the Truth* is made onely to ſuch as *continue in Chriſt's words*, that is, that are obedient to his Precepts. Joh. 8. 32.

And I adde, that ſuch a one's talks of Heaven and Hell are like to prevail very little upon his Auditors, or to be at all heeded by the greateſt part of them, while they conſider that the Preacher hath a ſoul to ſave as well as they. And therefore the love that they bear to their luſts, with the Devil's help, will eaſily perſwade them, that either theſe things are but mere fictions, or elſe that the one may be obtained, and the other eſcaped, upon far eaſier terms than he talks of. But as for thoſe few in whom the ſenſe of true Vertue and Piety have made ſo deep an impreſſion, as that they have never the ſlighter opinion of the neceſſity thereof, in regard of their Miniſter's wicked Example; the prejudice that they cannot but conceive againſt him renders his diſcourſes inſipid and unaffecting to them, and ſo they ordinarily take all opportunities to turn their backs upon him, and at length quite forſake him. And then, if

they are not as *understanding* as *well meaning* people, are too easily drawn away from all other Churches, when they have left their own, and become a prey to some demure and fairly pretending Sectary. And I am very certain from my own observation, that no one thing hath so conduced to the prejudice of our Church of *England*, and done the separating parties so much service as the scandalous lives of some that exercise the Ministerial Function in her. The late Excellent Bishop of *Down* and *Connar* hath this memorable passage in a Sermon he preached to the University at *Dublin: If ye become burning & shining Lights, if ye do not detain the Truth in unrighteousness, if ye walk in Light and live in the Spirit, your Doctrine will be true, and that truth will prevail: But if you live wickedly & scandalously, every little Schismatick will put you to shame, & draw Disciples after him, and abuse your flocks, and feed them with Colocynths and Hemlock, and place Heresie in the chair appointed for your Religion.* But to hasten to the dispatch of this unpleasant Topick: wicked ministers are of all other ill-livers the most scandalous, for they lay the greatest stumbling block, of any whatsoever, before mens souls; and what our Saviour said of the Scribes and Pharisees,

may

may in an eſpecial manner be applyed to them, *viz.* that they will neither enter into heaven themſelves nor yet ſuffer them that are entering to go in: ſo far are they from ſaving themſelves and thoſe that hear them. But I would to God, ſuch would well lay to heart thoſe ſad words of our Saviour, *Luke* 17. 1, 2. *It is impoſſible but that offences will come; but woe unto him through whom they come: it were better for him that a Milſtone were hanged about his neck, and he caſt into the Sea, &c.* And thoſe words are not more effectual to *ſcare* them, than are theſe following of a Heathen, *viz. Tully*, concerning vicious Philoſophers to *ſhame* them into a better life: ſaith he in his *Tuſculan Queſtions*, the ſecond book, *Quotuſquiſque Philoſophorum invenitur, qui ſit ita moratus, &c. What one of many Philoſophers is there who ſo behaves himſelf, and is of ſuch a mind and life, as Reaſon requireth; which accounteth his Doctrine not a boaſt of Science but a law of life; which obeyeth himſelf, and is governed by his own precepts? We may ſee ſome ſo light and vain, that it would have been better for them to be wholly ignorant, and never to have learn'd any thing: others ſo covetous of money, thirſty of praiſe, and honour, and many ſuch ſlaves to their luſts,*

ut cum eorum vitâ mirabiliter pugnet oratio, *That their lives do marvellouſly contradict their Doctrine.* Quod quidem mihi videtur eſſe turpiſſimum, &c. *Which to me ſeems the moſt filthy and abominable of all things. For as he which profeſſing himſelf a Grammarian ſpeaks barbarouſly, and who being deſirous to be accounted a Muſician ſings ſcurvily, is ſo much the more ſhame-worthy for his being defective in that the knowledge and skill of which he arrogates to himſelf; ſo a Philoſopher* in ratione vitæ peccans, *miſcarrying in his manners, is in this reſpect the baſer and more wretched Creature, that in the office of which he will needs be a Maſter, he doth amiſs;* artemq; vitæ profeſſus delinquit in vitâ, *and profeſſing the art of well-living, or of teaching others to live well, is faulty and miſcarrieth in his own life.* Could this excellent Heathen thus inveigh againſt wicked Philoſophers, what Satyre can be tart and ſevere enough for ungodly Miniſters of the Glorious and moſt Holy Goſpel of the Bleſſed Jeſus? I will adde one more ſaying of our Saviour's, which he ſpake to his Diſciples, whom he was training up for the Miniſtry, *Matt.* 5. 13. *Ye are the Salt of the earth; but if the Salt hath loſt its ſavour, wherewith ſhall it be ſalted? It*

is

is thence-forth good for nothing, but to be caſt out, and to be trodden under foot of men.

Well, I ſay that the Deſign of our Saviour and his Goſpel being to make men holy, thoſe behave themſelves infinitely diſbecoming his Miniſters and the Preachers of the Goſpel, that live unholily; and ſo do all ſuch alſo (as was at firſt intimated) as do not above all things endeavour the promoting and furtherance of that Deſign. And of that number are thoſe that are ever affecting to make people ſtare at their high-flown and Bum-baſte Language, or to pleaſe their Phancies with fooliſh jingles and Pedantick and Boyiſh wit, or to be admired for their ability in dividing a hair, their *Metaphyſical* acuteneſs and Scholaſtick ſubtilty; or for their doughty dexterity in controverſial ſquabble. And among ſuch may thoſe alſo, and thoſe *chiefly*, be reckoned, that ſeek to approve themſelves to their Auditors to be men of Myſteries, and endeavour to make the plain and eaſie Doctrines of the Goſpel as intricate and obſcure as ever they are able: Theſe are ſo far from endeavouring above all things to advance the *Deſign of the Goſpel*, that it hath not any greater enemies in the whole world

than they are. And to them I may adde such as preach up Free-grace and Christian Privileges otherwise than as Motives to excite to Obedience, and never scarcely insist upon any *Duties* except those of believing, laying hold on Christ's Righteousnes, applying the promises (which are all really the same with them) and renouncing our own Righteousnes, which those that have none at all to renounce have a mighty kindnes for. All which rightly understood, may, I grant, and ought to be preached; but to make the Christians duty to consist either wholly or mostly in those particulars, and especially as they are explained by not a few, is the way, effectually to harden Hypocrites, and encrease their number, but to make no sincere converts.

Those again do nothing les than chiefly promote *the busines of Holines*, that are never in their Element, but when they are talking of the Irrespectiveness of God's Decrees, the Absoluteness of his Promises, the utter disability and perfect impotence of Natural men to do any thing towards their own conversion, &c. and insist with greatest Emphasis and Vehemence upon such like false and dangerous opinions. And those may well accompany and

and be joyned with the foregoing, that are of ſuch *narrow*, and therefore *Unchriſtian* Spirits as to make it their Great buſineſs to advance the petty intereſt of any party whatſoever, and concern themſelves more about doing this, than about promoting and carrying on that wherein conſiſts the chief good of all Mankind: and are more zealous to make Proſelytes to their Particular Sects than Converts to a Holy Life; and preſs more exact and rigid Conformity to their Modes and Forms than to the Laws of God and the Eſſential Duties of the Chriſtian Religion.

Such as all the forementioned have doubtleſs little cauſe to expect a [*well done good and faithful ſervant*] from the mouth of their Saviour at the laſt day; their practice being ſo very contrary to that of his (whoſe Miniſters they profeſs themſelves to be) when he was in the world; and they making Chriſtianity ſo infinitely different a thing from what he made it.

And furthermore, it is unqueſtionably the Duty of all the Stewards of the Myſteries of God to take ſpecial heed that they do not by over-ſevere inſiſting on any little matters and unneceſſary things, give their people a temptation to conclude

that they lay the greateſt weight upon them; but ſo to behave themſelves towards them, as to give them aſſurance that there is no intereſt ſo dear to them as is that of the Salvation of their Souls. And laſtly, to be ſo ſelf-denying as to have a regard to the weakneſſes of perſons, ſo far as lawfully, and without diſobeying Authority they may, to prevent their departure from Communion with the Church they belong to; and to uſe all fair and prudent ways to perſwade thoſe back again thereunto, which there is any the leaſt reaſon to hope are not irrecoverably gone away. It being very much the intereſt of their ſouls not to continue in ſeparation: and not of *theirs* only but of *others* too, in that ſtrifes and contentions, envyings and animoſities are like to be kept alive, and greatly to encreaſe, while men keep at a diſtance from one another; and where theſe are (as it was ſaid S. *James* hath told us) there muſt needs be *confuſion and every evil work*.

And this is no other than what the great S. *Paul* thought it no diſparagement to him to be exemplary to us in. For ſaith he, 1 *Cor.* 9. 19, &c. *Though I be free from all men, yet have I made my ſelf a ſervant to all, that I might gain the more: And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain*

gain the Jews; to them that are under the law as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; to them that are without law (or obſerve not the law of *Moſes*) *as without law, that I might gain them that are without law: To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means ſave ſome.* The ſumme of which words amount to this, That he denyed himſelf in the uſe of his liberty to gain thoſe who were not acquainted with the extent of it, and dealt with all ſorts of men in that way which he thought moſt probable to convert them to Chriſtianity, and keep them in the profeſſion of it. Not that he ſneaked and diſſembled and made weak people think that he was of their mind, and ſo confirmed them in their miſtakes and follies; or had any regard to the humours of unreaſonable and meerly captious people that will be finding faults upon no ground at all: this muſt needs be unworthy of an Apoſtle; for it is ſo of all Inferiour Miniſters and likewiſe of every private Chriſtian.

And our paſt diſcourſe aſſures us alſo that the promoting of Holineſs in mens hearts and lives ought to be the only deſign of Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline and Church Cen-

Censures: And 'tis easie to shew that if the Laws of all Christian Churches were framed and the execution of them directed *onely*, or *above any other*, to the service of this Design; or that no interest did sway so much with their Chief Governours, as that which was (and still is) most dear to the Great Founder and King of the Church whom they represent; and if they were willing to lose in their little and petty concerns, that they might gain in this Grand one, we should quickly see Christendome in most lovely and blessed Circumstances. All people that have any thing of sincerity, would quickly unite and agree together, and as for factious Hypocrites they would be with ease suppresst, and put out of all capacity of doing mischief. This I say might be easily shewn, and plainly demonstrated; but it needs not, there being nothing in the world more undeniably evident.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVI.

The Tenth Inference.

That an Obedient Temper of Mind is an excellent and neceſſary Qualification to prepare men for a firm Belief and right underſtanding of the Goſpel of Chriſt, That it is ſo by virtue of Chriſt's promiſe, That it is ſo in its own Nature. This ſhewed in three Particulars, viz. *in that,* 1. *It will help us to judge without prejudice concerning the Doctrines contained in the Goſpel.* 2. *It will give ſatisfaction concerning the main Doctrines of Chriſtianity far excelling any that can ariſe from mere ſpeculation.* 3. *It will ſecure from the Cauſes of Errour in thoſe Points that are of weightieſt importance. Six Cauſes of ſuch Errours laid down; and an Obedient Diſpoſition of mind ſhewed to ſecure from each of them.*

TEnthly, *We learn what is the beſt Temper and Diſpoſition of mind to bring to the Study of Chriſt's Goſpel, in order to our firm belief and right underſtanding of it.* Seeing its *Deſign* is to make men entirely

entirely obedient, and truly holy, it is evident that a deſire ſo to be is the moſt excellent and neceſſary qualification for that purpoſe. Our Saviour ſaith, *John* 7. 17. *If any man will do his will* (or is willing to do it) *he ſhall know of the Doctrine whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of my ſelf*; That is, in the firſt place, he ſhall be throughly ſatisfied concerning the truth of the Goſpel, ſhall be abundantly convinced that the Chriſtian Religion is no Impoſture, that the Author of it came from Heaven, as he declared he did, and was ſent by God to reveal his Will. Such a one, when it comes to be ſufficiently propoſed to him, ſhall heartily embrace the Goſpel as containing the true, the *onely* true Religion. And therefore obſerve what he ſaith, *John* 8.47. *He that is of God, heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, becauſe ye are not of God*: That is, as if he ſhould ſay, He that is of an obedient Temper, and ambitious of doing the will of God, ſhall receive the Doctrine which in his name I preach to him; and the reaſon why you *Jews*, for your parts refuſe ſo to do, is becauſe you are inſincere and hypocritical.

It is ſaid *Acts* 13.48. That as many of the Gentiles as were τεταγμένοι (which is doubt-

doubtleſs in this place to be rendred) *diſpoſed*, or *in a ready preparedneſs, for Eternal Life, believed*; That is, Thoſe which were *Proſelytes of the Gate*, who were admitted by the *Jews* to the Hope of Eternal Life, and to have their portion in the Age to come, without ſubmitting to their whole law, or any more than owning the God of Iſrael, and obſerving the *ſeven precepts of Noah* (as Maſter *Mede* hath learnedly and with great conviction ſhewn;) Theſe being deſirous to live Godlily, and not prejudiced againſt the Chriſtian Religion as the *Jews* generally were, did then at *Antioch* receive the Goſpel upon its firſt being made known to them: And of this ſort was *Cornelius*, whoſe converſion to Chriſtianity we read of before in the tenth Chapter.

Secondly, and conſequently, this ſence is alſo implied in the firſt cited words of our Saviour, *viz.* That, as he which is willing to do God's will, ſhall know that Chriſt's Doctrine came from him, ſo he ſhall rightly underſtand that Doctrine too. For it would be to no purpoſe for him to believe the Goſpel to be true, if his Faith be not accompanied with an ability to paſs a right judgement on the ſence of it. And therefore he muſt needs be able to diſtinguiſh

guiſh between the Doctrine of Chriſt and that which is falſly impoſed at any time upon the world as his, and fathered upon him by ungodly Heretiques; as well as ſatisfied that what he delivered in the general is the Will of God. S. *John* to this ſame purpoſe expreſſeth himſelf, 1 *Epiſtle* 4. 6. *He that knoweth God* (that is, practically, or is Obedient) *heareth us*; *he that is not of God* (or is not willing to obey him) *heareth not us*; *hereby know we the Spirit of Truth and the ſpirit of error*: That is, by this obedient temper we are capable of diſtinguiſhing betwixt theſe two Spirits. And, I ſay, from the *Deſign of the Goſpel*, that being to make men *Holy*, it may be preſumed, that whoſoever conſidereth it with a deſire of being ſo, muſt needs both believe it to have come from God, and alſo be inlightened in the true knowledge of, at leaſt, all the neceſſary Points of it; and be enabled to give a particular, explicite and underſtanding aſſent to them: So that it ſhall not lie in the power of any ſubtile ſeducer to rob him of his Faith, or to infect him with any Principles that are directly deſtructive to it, or are ſo plainly in their conſequences ſo, as that he ſhall ſee it, and make that ill uſe of them as to be perſwaded

swaded by them to let go his hold of any Fundamental Article of the Christian Religion.

For our Saviour having so infinitely concerned himself for the destroying of sin in us, and to make us partakers of his holiness, as to aim at this above all things, in all he did and suffered in the world, and to make it the whole business of his Gospel; we may be certain that those *Honest* Souls that come to the study of it, with a desire of reaping *this* advantage by it, cannot be left destitute of Christ's grace and blessing to make it successful to them for that purpose; which it is impossible it should be without a thorow-belief of it, and a right understanding of, at least, all its absolutely necessary and Essential parts. This we might be assured of from that consideration, though there were no Promise extant of that his grace to such well disposed people, as there are diverse others besides that which we have produced.

But besides this, a sincere desire of being obedient and holy must needs *of it self* very greatly dispose us for the belief and sufficient understanding of the Gospel, and be very necessary in order thereunto also. For

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First, It will help us to judge without prejudice and partiality concerning it and the particular Doctrines therein contained. He whose hearty desire it is to please God in doing his Will, will be unbyassed in his judgement in enquiries after it. He knows that he cannot make that to be Truth by thinking one way or other, which was not *before* so; and that truth will be truth whatsoever he thinks on it: And therefore doth not wish that this or that may be so, and then endeavour to perswade himself that it is so; but will only examine what is so, that he may not entertain an erroneous perswasion. He will bring his mind to the Gospel, and not wrest the Gospel to his mind. But vice and sin, being allowed and predominant in the soul, must needs warp the judgement and clap a heavy byas on it, that will draw it to favour, as much as may be, their interest in all matters it is concerned in. And therefore a man of wicked and depraved Affections cannot but be exceeding unapt to study a Book whose Design is such as the Gospel's is. But the obediently-disposed will bring free, ingenuous and candid spirits to this work, and therefore are very fitly prepared to do it with good success.

Secondly, This honest and sincere tem-

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per of mind will help a man to evidence for his satisfaction concerning the main Doctrines of the Gospel, far excelling any that can arise from mere speculation; namely that of *sense* and *Experience*: The man that is indued with it, shall *know of the Doctrine, that it is of God*, he shall not onely *believe* it according to the strict notion of that Phrase. There is an inward sweetness in Holy Truths that a Good soul will relish, and savour, but the vitiated palates of those that are in love with any lust cannot taste it. *How sweet* (said *David*) *are thy words unto my taste, yea, sweeter than Honey unto my mouth.* Now *naked demonstrations* give but very poor and slight satisfaction in comparison of that knowledge that ariseth from *sense* and *Experience*; and this latter alone will remove from us all doubt and uncertainty. Therefore that was so far from being a *weak* and *foolish*, that it was a most *worthy* and *laudable* speech of the honest Martyr: *Though I cannot dispute, I can die for Christ*: No one that hath tasted honey, can at all doubt of its sweetness, though he may want cunning enough to answer the Arguments whereby a Sophister may attempt to prove it bitter. We say, *seeing is believing*. And the great evidence that our Saviour pro-

ved himself to be the *Messias* by, was that of *sense*. By this was *Thomas* his incredulity, as very strong as it was, immediately overcome. And the *Bodily* senses are not more infallible than is the *purified* sense of the *Soul*.

Thirdly, The aforesaid temper of mind will secure those in whom it is, from the causes of errour in those Points of the Gospel that are of weightiest importance. It is undoubtedly certain that mistakes about these cannot possibly arise from the obscurity of that Book, it being as plain as heart can wish in all matters of absolute necessity; as hath been shewn in *the Free Discourse*. Therefore errours that are of a damnable nature must necessarily proceed from *vicious* causes, such as,

1. Gross Ignorance: But 'tis not possible to find this in any soul that is sincerely desirous to obey God.

2. A too high opinion of our parts and Reason: By which is often occasioned a rejection of whatsoever they are not able to comprehend. But the honest soul can have no such conceits of *his* Reason; he knows nothing more undoubtedly than that he is a weak and most shallow Creature. He knows that the most contemptible Insect and common Weed are able to pose

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and put him to a *non-plus*, and that it would therefore be the higheſt of Arrogances in him to believe nothing revealed to him, but what is an adequate object of his underſtanding. This man will ſubmit his Reaſon to Divine Revelation, and not Divine Revelation to his Reaſon. 'Tis true he cannot, though he would never ſo fain, believe that which doth manifeſtly *contradict* the Reaſon of his mind, and the Innate ſenſe of his ſoul; but therefore it is certain that no ſuch things are to be found in the Goſpel, nor can be a matter of Divine Revelation.

3. Proud Affectation of being thought wiſer than other folk. This was a great thing which made the firſt Heretiques that the Church of Chriſt ever knew, as appeareth by the Arrogant Title they aſſumed to themſelves, and diſtinguiſhed their Sect by, *viz. Gnoſtiques.* But that temper of mind that makes men unfeignedly deſirous of Piety and true Vertue is inconſiſtent with all ſuch ambitious and aſpiring thoughts.

4. Liquoriſh curioſity and wantonneſs of ſpirit. When people are glutted with thoſe wholeſome truths which they have for many years been entertained with, and will be hunting after Novelties; when

they grow weary of their honeſt Teachers, and will be following every Upſtart that ſets himſelf in oppoſition to them; it can hardly otherwiſe be but that they muſt fall into dangerous errors. The Apoſtle ſaith, 2 *Tim.* 4. 3. that, *The time will come when they will not endure ſound Doctrine, but after their own luſts will they heap to themſelves Teachers:* (But how comes it to paſs that they will do thus? it followeth) *having itching Ears.* But the obediently-inclined ſoul will be careful to keep in that good way, which by experience he hath found to be ſo, and to avoid all bye-paths. Nor will he be running after Seducers, but ſhun them all he can, as being conſcious of his own weakneſs and his aptneſs without the Grace of God to be miſled.

5. The love of, and being wedded to any one luſt whatſoever will certainly endanger mens falling into the worſt of Hereſies. When men have ſome beloved ſins or ſin, which they are reſolved they will not part with, and are as a *Right Eye* or *Right Hand* to them, they are eaſily perſwaded to entertain ſuch Principles as will allow them to live in them, and to abandon thoſe that will not; and therefore to *wreſt the Scriptures* (as thoſe the Apoſtle ſpeaks

Matt. 5. 29, 30.

ſpeaks of, 2 *Pet.* 3. 16.) *to their own deſtruction*, and put them upon the rack to make them ſpeak ſuch things as may conſiſt with the intereſt of their corrupt affections. *Quod volumus, facilè credimus*, that which we would have to be true, we eaſily believe is ſo; and what we deſire ſhould be falſe, we are with little difficulty perſwaded to diſbelieve. This therefore, hath had ſuch a very fearful influence on not a few, as to cauſe them at length to throw away their BIBLES, to deny the Immortality of their Souls, and diſbelieve as much as they can even the Being of a Deity, becauſe they are ſenſible that while they continue in their ſins, it is infinitely their Intereſt that the holy Scriptures ſhould be falſe, that there ſhould be no other life, and no God. But I need not ſay, that the Honeſt, Obedient Perſon is one that is not devoted to any Luſt.

6. The juſt judgement of God upon theſe and the like accounts, is the laſt cauſe I ſhall mention of mens diſbelieving the Goſpel, and renouncing any of the Eſſentials of Chriſtianity. *Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, (that is to acknowledge him in their practice) *God gave them up to a Re-*

probate (or an adulterate, corrupted) *mind.* Rom. 1. 28. *Because they received not the love of the Truth, that they might be saved; God shall send them* ἐνέργειαν πλάνης *strength of delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the Truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.* 2 *Thess.* 2. 10. The forementioned particulars do of themselves lead to the most dangerous errours, how much more then must they needs so do, when they are backed on with the Divine Vengeance. But if *honesty* and an *Obedient* temper of Soul will secure from the *other* causes of errour and seduction, it will, in so doing, secure from *this last.*

So that it is manifest that a sincere desire of Righteousness and true Holiness will not fail to help men to a thorow-belief and sufficient understanding of that Book which is onely designed to indue them with it: And that nothing can occasion the contrary but a wilful adhering to some one or other immorality; and that this hath a very great aptness so to do. So that it is not the least matter of wonder, to see men of excellent wits and brave accomplishments, either fall into gross errours or even into a flat disbelief of the Christian Religion. As strange as this may

seem

ſeem to ſome, it appears from our paſt Diſcourſe, that there is not any real cauſe of admiration in it. For other endowments, of as excellent uſe as they may be when accompanied with that of an obedient temper, muſt needs do more hurt than good to the Souls that are adorned and graced with them, when ſeparated from it, and occaſion thoſe vices that may well make way for Hereſies. And it is certain that an acute wit when it hath not a purified ſenſe going along with it, is ſo far from being a ſufficient prærequiſite to the right underſtanding of Evangelical truths, that it is as notable an Engine as the Grand Deceiver can deſire to make uſe of, in order to the bringing about his miſchievous deſigns upon the perſon that is Maſter of it. So that indeed, it is on the contrary rather matter of wonder, that any man that hath a naughty *Will*, ſhould have a good *Judgement* in Goſpel-truths, though both his natural and acquired parts ſhould be ne'r ſo great. And again we may without the leaſt breach of Charity preſume, that whoſoever, to whom Chriſtianity is ſufficiently made known, doth either diſbelieve it or any of the Fundamentals of it, his *Heart* is much more in fault than is his *Head*, and that he hath darken-

ed his Discerning faculty and greatly dimmed the Eye of his Soul, by entertaining some filthy lust that sends up a thick fog and mist of vapours to it. *If any man teach otherwise* (saith S. *Paul*, 1 *Tim.* 6. 3.) *and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the Doctrine that is according to Godliness; he is proud*, &c. not he is *weak* and *cannot*, but he is *wicked* and *will not* understand the Truth. And, by the way, this Discourse may conduce to the no small encouragement of the weaker sort: Let such be but heartily solicitous about doing God's Will and having the Design of the Gospel effected in them, and they need not fear that their weakness will betray them into the wrong way to Blessedness.

CHAP.

CHAP. XXVII.

The Last Inference.

That we are taught by the Design of Christianity, *wherein the Essence, Power and Life of it consisteth. Instances of what kind of things it doth not consist in. For what Ends the several Exercises of Piety and Devotion are injoyned. How God is Glorified by men, and by what means. Whom it is our duty to esteem and carry our selves towards as true Christians. That by following the Example of Christ and making his Life our Pattern, we shall assure our selves that the* Design of Christianity *is effected in us, and that we are indued with the Power of it.*

LAstly, We learn from the Doctrine of the *Design of Christianity, wherein the Essence, Power and Life of it consisteth, viz.*

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In a good state and habit of mind, in a holy frame and temper of Soul; whereby it esteemeth God as the Chiefest good, preferreth him and his Son Jesus before all the world, and prizeth above all things an interest in the Divine Perfections; such as *Justice* and *Righteousness*, *universal Charity*, *Goodness*, *Mercy* and *Patience*, and *all kinds of Purity*. From whence doth naturally proceed a hearty complyance with all the Holy Precepts of the Gospel; and sincere endeavours to perform all those actions which are agreeable to them, are necessary expressions of those and the like vertues, and means for the obtaining and encrease of them; and to avoid the Contrary.

The Kingdom of God (or Christianity) *is not meat and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; as Saint *Paul* tells us, *Rom.* 14.17. That is, it doth not consist in any merely external matters, or bodily exercises, which (elsewhere he saith) *do profit but little*. And as not in such as he there meaneth, *viz.* things of a perfectly indifferent nature, and neither good nor evil; so neither in such as are very good and laudable for

1 Tim. 4.8

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the matter of them. It is onely their flowing from an inward Principle of Holineſs, that denominateth any whatſoever Chriſtian actions. But ſuch as are onely occaſioned by certain external inducements and motives, and proceed not from any good temper and diſpoſition of Soul, be they never ſo commendable in themſelves, beſpeak not him that performeth them to be a true and ſincere Chriſtian. *He is not a Jew*, ſaith the ſame Apoſtle, *that is one outwardly, neither is that Circumciſion that is outward in the fleſh: But he is a Jew, that is one inwardly; and Circumciſion is that of the heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter, whoſe praiſe is not of men but of God*, *Rom.* 2. 28, 29. That is, he onely is a true child of *Abraham*, who in the purity of the heart obeyeth thoſe ſubſtantial Laws that are impoſed by God upon him. And if no one that doth not thus, might properly be called a *Jew* or child of *Abraham*, much leſs can the name of a *Chriſtian* and a *Diſciple of the Holy Jeſus* be due to him. He (it is evident) is onely ſo, in whom the *Deſign of Chriſtianity* is in ſome meaſure accompliſh'd. And it appears from what hath been ſaid that its Deſign is Primarily

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and immediately upon the *Nature*; which, being rectified and renewed, will certainly discover it self so to be throughout the *whole life*. For *a good tree will*
Matt. 7. *not bring forth corrupt fruit, nor a corrupt tree good fruit*, as our Saviour hath said. Were it possible (as it is not) that we should forbear all outward acts of sin, and yet our *Souls* cleave to it, we could not but be destitute of the Life and Power of Christianity. And should we abound never so much in the exercise of good duties, if our design in so doing be to gratifie any lust, and serve some carnal interest, they will be so far from *Christian* actions, that they may be most truly and properly called *sins*. There is no one duty more affectionately recommended in the Gospel to us than is Almsgiving; but to give alms to be seen and praised by men, is no better than base Hypocrisie (as Christ hath told us) so far is it from an expression of *Christian* Charity. And whatsoever *materially* vertuous actions proceed not from the principle of love to vertue, though I cannot say that all such are hateful to God, yet they want that degree of perfection that is requisite to make them *truly Christian*.

And

And it is a plain caſe that he is not the Chriſtian, that is much employed in the Duties of Prayer, Hearing God's Word, Reading the Bible and other good Books, &c. but he that diſcovereth a good mind in them, in whom the end of them is effected, and who is the better for them. This is the buſineſs for the ſake of which *Prayer* is enjoyned. We are therein to acknowledge God's Infinite Perfections, and our obligations to him, that we may expreſs our hearty ſenſe of them, and in order to our being the more affected with *thoſe*, and our having the more grateful reſentments of *theſe*. We are in that duty to addreſs our ſelves to the Divine Majeſty, in the name of Chriſt, for what we want; that we may by this means both expreſs and encreaſe our dependance on him, and truſt in him for the obtaining thereof. And to confeſs and bewail our ſins, to exerciſe Godly ſorrow and contrition of Soul; and that by ſo doing we may be ſo much the more deeply humbled for them, and have the greater averſeneſs in our wills againſt them. The communion which we are to enjoy with God in Prayer is ſuch as conſiſteth in being enamoured with the Excel-

cellencies that are in him, and in receiving communications of his Nature and Spirit from him.

Therefore also are we commanded to Hear and Read God's Word, that we may come thereby to understand, and be put in mind of the several Duties he requires of us, and be powerfully moved to the doing of them.

And the like may be said concerning all the other Exercises of Piety and Devotion, the end of them is more and more to dispose our Hearts to the Love, and our wills to the obedience of our Blessed Creatour and Redeemer. And busying our selves in any of them without this Design may well be counted in the number of the fruitless and unaccountable actions of our lives. Thus to do is prodigally to wast and mispend our time: as the Jews were upbraided by one of their adversaries, with doing, upon the account of their *Sabbath*, saying, *That they lost one day in seven.* And those that are most constant in their Addresses to the Majesty of Heaven, both in the Publique and Private worship of him, if they go into his pre-

presence with the entertainment and allowance of any sinful Affection, they have never the more of the Divine Approbation upon that account. *If I regard*, saith *David*, *iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.* God esteemeth no better of such as do so, than as Hypocritical Fawners upon him, and false-hearted Complementers of him; and hath declared that their Sacrifices are an *Abomination* to him. The Generality of the Jews were such a people: God by his Prophet *Isaiah* speaks thus concerning them. *They seek me dayly and delight to know my ways, as a Nation that did Righteousness, and forsook not the Ordinance of their God. They ask of me the Ordinances of Justice, they take delight in approaching to God.* They were a people that loved to fast and pray, and afflict their Souls, and to make their voice to be heard on high: But giving liberty to themselves in plain immoralities, God declared that all this was even hateful to him: As may be seen in the Fifty eighth of *Isaiah.* And he there likewise telleth them, that the *Fast which he took pleasure in*, consisteth *in loosing the bands of wickedness, in undoing the heavy burthens; and letting the oppressed go free; in breaking*

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ing every yoke; in dealing their bread to the Hungry; and bringing the poor that are cast out, to their houses; in covering the Naked; and the exercise of strict justice, mercy and kindness. And in the first Chapter, he asks them, *To what purpose the multitude of their Sacrifices were* (though they were no other than he himself by the Law of *Moses* required) and charged them *to bring no more vain oblations to him*; told them that *their Incense was an Abomination to him, their New-moons and Sabbaths and calling of Assemblyes he could not away with*, that *their Solemn Assembly was iniquity*, that *their New-Moons and appointed Feasts his Soul hated*, and that *he was weary to bear them*. And all this because these were the onely or main things they recommended themselves to him by; their Religion chiefly consisted in them; and they gave themselves leave to be unrighteous, cruel and unmerciful, as may there be seen.

God abhorrs to see men come cringing and crowching before him, bestowing a great heap of the best words upon him, and the worst upon themselves, and with dejected countenances bemoaning themselves

ſelves and making lamentable complaints of their wickedneſs to him, imploring mercy and favour from him, &c. when they reſolvedly perſiſt in diſobedience. So far are ſuch things as theſe from being able to make amends for any of their ſins, that God accounts them no better than Additions to their moſt heinous impieties; as by the Sixty ſixth of *Iſaiah*, it further appeareth: It is ſaid there, *He that killeth an Ox, is as if he ſlew a man; he that ſacrificeth a Lamb, as if he cut off a Dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered Swines blood; he that burneth Incenſe, as if he bleſſed an Idol:* And how came this to paſs? it follows: *They have choſen their own ways, and their Soul delighteth in their Abominations.* So that if he had ſuch an opinion of the goodlieſt and moſt acceptable Sacrifices when offered by Diſobedient and Immorall Perſons, under the *Law*; it is impoſſible that he ſhould have one jot a better of the moſt affectionate Devotions of thoſe that take no care to be really and inwardly righteous and holy under the *Goſpel*. And in being ſo, conſiſts (as was ſaid) the Soul and Life of Chriſtianity.

Not that a *true Christian* can have undervaluing and slight thoughts of the External worship and service of God; nor that he can contemn or neglect praying to him, singing his Praises, Hearing or Reading his Word, &c. Nothing less: For by the serious and diligent performance of these and the like Duties he comes to acquire and encrease that good temper of Soul that gives him the denomination of such a one, through the assistance of the Divine Grace. He is one, to speak in the words of *Hierocles*, as σπεύδει ἃ εὔχεται, καὶ εὔχεται ἃ σπεύδει, *joyns Endeavours to Prayers, and Prayers also* (with the other parts of Divine Worship) *to his other Endeavours.*

And besides, the solemn acknowledgements of God, both in publique and private, are expressions of Natural Justice. *Quid aliud est pietas* (saith *Tully*) *quàm Justitia adversus Deos? What is Piety or Devotion but Justice towards God?* And each of the significations of it, whether Natural or Positive, they are *Payments of a due to him*; so that men cannot be so much as *honest*, and omit the honouring of

of the Divine Majesty by them. But it is certain that these Performances do him no honour at all, any otherwise than as they proceed from a good and sincere Soul. And to this purpose our often cited Philosopher hath this other excellent saying, *viz. The greatest abundance and profusest costliness of Oblations bring no Honour to God, except they are offered with a Divine mind: For the Gifts and Sacrifices of fools are but food for the fire. Sacrifices* in Ancient times were called the *Food* of Almighty God, as being provision made for his house; but (saith this Philosopher) when they proceed from fools (or wicked men) they are at best but the *Fire's meat*, They signifie nothing to God, and are merely thrown away.

ἡ τῶν προσφερομένων πολυτέλεια τιμὴ εἰς Θεὸν οὐ γίνεται, εἰ μετὰ τοῦ ἐνθέου φρονήματος προσάγοιτο. Δῶρα γὰρ καὶ θυηπολίαι ἀφρόνων πυρὸς τροφή. Pag. 25.

And indeed the best intelligible and most significant honour that our devoutest services bring to God, is by their being a means of making us more *like* unto him. And as I shewed, out of the Learned Master *Smith's* Treatise, *how God most glorifieth himself*, so I think it

not amiss to transcribe more lines of that worthy person, wherein he excellently sheweth *how we most glorifie God*; and they immediately follow the former. Saith he, *pag.* 409. *As God's seeking his own glory in respect of us is most properly the flowing forth of his Goodness upon us; so our seeking the Glory of God is most properly our endeavouring a participation of his goodness, and an earnest uncessant pursuing after Divine perfection. When God becomes so Great in our eyes, and all created things so little, that we reckon upon nothing as worthy of our aims or ambitions but a serious participation of the Divine Nature, and the exercise of Divine Vertues,* Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Kindness, Goodness *and the like: When the Soul beholding the Infinite Beauty and Loveliness of the Divinity, and then looking down and beholding all created perfection mantled over with darkness, is ravished into love and admiration of that never-setting Brightness, and endeavours after the greatest resemblance of God in* Justice, Love *and* Goodness: *when conversing with him* ἐν ἡσυχῳ ἐπαφῇ, *by a secret feeling of the virtue, sweetness and power of his* Goodness,

ness, *we endeavour to assimilate our selves to him: Then we may be said to* Glorifie *him indeed. God seeks no glory but* his own, *and we have none of* our own *to give him. God in all things seeks himself and his own Glory, as finding nothing* Better *than himself; and when we love him above all things, and endeavour to be most like him, we declare plainly that we count nothing* Better *than he is.*

See more to the same purpose, *Pag.* 141, 142, 143. And this same Excellent Notion the *Pythagoræans* (however they came by it) did also teach. It was one of their sayings, *Thou wilt best glorifie God, by assimilating and making thy mind like to God.*

τιμήσεις τὸν Θεὸν ἄριστα, ἐὰν τῷ Θεῷ τὴν διάνοιαν ὁμοιώσῃς.

And I will trouble the Reader with one more of our Philosopher's sayings which is no less worthy of his observation than any of the past recited ones, *viz. Thou canst not honour God in giving ought to him, but by becoming a meet and worthy Person to receive from him.*

οὐ γὰρ τιμήσεις τὸν Θεὸν διδούς τι αὐτῷ, ἀλλ' ἄξιος τοῦ λαβεῖν τὰ παρ' ἐκείνου γενόμενος. Comment. in Aur. Carm. Pag. 22.

And the great and Infallible Oracle of Truth, our Bleſſed Saviour, hath aſ-
Joh. 5. 8. ſured us, that, *Herein is his Father Glorified, that we bear much Fruit*; that we are fruitful in all Holineſs. And we learn from S. *Paul*, *Phil.* 1. 11. That they are the *Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt* (or the effects of his Grace and Holy Spirit) which redound *to the praiſe and glory of God.* And then do we praiſe him moſt ſignificantly and effectually, when we are *filled* (as there he prays that the *Philippians* may be) *with theſe Fruits:* when Righteouſneſs takes poſſeſſion of our Souls, grows and encreaſes in them, and exerts it ſelf in our Lives (as it muſt needs do whereſoever it is) and our whole converſations ſhine with it.

In ſhort; *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing*, (neither any Opinions, nor Performances, nor Forbearances, that have no influence upon the Soul and Spirit, are any thing;) *but the keeping the Commandments of God:* This is all in all. *In Chriſt Jeſus* nothing at all *availeth* but ſuch a *Faith*

Faith as works by love (δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη or *is perfected by Charity*) and *a New-creature.* And *if any man be in Chriſt, he is a New creature*; and whoſoever is a New creature, is in Chriſt or a true Chriſtian. All which S. *Paul* hath plainly taught us, in 1 *Cor.* 7. 19. *Gal.* 5. 6. 2 *Cor.* 5. 17. Thoſe in whom the *Deſign of the Goſpel* hath taken good effect, are *indeed Chriſtians*, and none but ſuch: in the ſucceſs of that muſt needs lie the power of Chriſtianity, and in nothing elſe. And therefore whoſoever they are in whom the Genuine effects of Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs are conſpicuous, we ought to look upon them as Living Members of that Body whereof Chriſt is the Head. Whoever are ready to profeſs their Faith in God and Chriſt and the Holy Spirit in all Scripture Phraſes (without perverting their manifeſt and apparent ſenſe) and lead a life anſwerable, for ought that we can diſcern, to the clear intimations of our Saviour's will, and all the Rules plainly laid down in his Holy Goſpel, (though it ſhould not be their fortune to concur with us in all our ſentiments) it is our duty to judge them to be indued with all the Eſſentials and Integral parts of Chriſtia-

nity, and accordingly to carry our selves towards them: Or we shall offer them too great a temptation to suspect, that we our selves are ignorant wherein they consist, and for all our great Profession are void of them.

There is one thing more which I cannot forbear to add concerning the weighty and most important Point we are now discoursing, and which contains the summ of all that need to be said about it, *viz.* That it is impossible we should not have the *Design of Christianity* accomplished in us, and therefore that we should be destitute of the Power of it, if we make *our Saviour's most Excellent Life* (a short account of which we have been in this Tractate presented with,) the *Pattern of our Lives*; if we write after that Fair Copy he hath therein set us, if we tread in his Blessed Steps, and be such, according to our Measure and Capacity, as we have understood he was in this World. Those that sincerely and industriously endeavour to imitate the Holy Jesus in his Spirit and Actions, can never be ignorant what it is to be truly Christians; nor can they fail to be so. And if the History of his Life were

were more peruſed and minded, and that he deſigned to be therein our Example (as both he and his Apoſtles have often enough aſſured us he did) were more ſeriouſly conſidered, it could not poſſibly be that the Deſign of his Goſpel, and that wherein conſiſts the Power of Godlineſs and Soul of Chriſtianity, ſhould be by ſo many ſo very miſerably miſtaken, as we ſee it is.

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The Concluſion.

WHat remaineth now but that we ſedulouſly and with the greateſt concernedneſs betake our ſelves to find that, which hath been proved to be the *Deſign of Chriſtanity*, accompliſh'd in our Hearts and Lives.

That we endeavour above all things in the World *to walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith we are called*; and that *our Converſation be as it becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt:* And by that means make it appear to our ſelves and others that we are not in the number of thoſe wretched Souls on whom the knowledge of the moſt incomparable Religion is merely thrown away, and beſtowed to very ill or to no purpoſe.

That we place the *Kingdom of God* not

not *in Word*, but *in Power*; and our Chriſtianity not in letting our Tongues looſe, but in bridling both them and our exorbitant Affections.

That we make leſs Noiſe, be leſs *Diſputacious*, and more *Obedient*; That we *Talk* and *Cavil* leſs, and *Be* and *Live* better: As well knowing, that an Objecting, quarrelſome and wrangling humour ſerves to no better end than eating out the heart and life of all true Religion.

Let us Exerciſe our ſelves unto Reall and Subſtantial Godlineſs, and in keeping our Conſciences void of offence both towards God and towards men; and in Studying the Goſpel to inable us not to *Diſcourſe*, or onely to *Believe*; but alſo and above all things to *Do well*.

Let us eſteem Chriſtianity a Principle of ſuch Vigour, Spritelineſs and Activity, as to be aſſured of nothing more than that it cannot poſſibly *Be* where it doth not *Act*; and that the lives

lives of thoſe that are indued with it cannot but bear witneſs to the Force of it.

Let us do what lyeth in us to Convince our *Atheiſts* that the Religion of the Bleſſed Jeſus is no Trick or Device; and our *Wanton and Looſe Chriſtians*, that it no *Notional* buſineſs or *Speculative* Science, by letting them ſee moſt Excellent effects produced in our ſelves by it: By ſhewing them how Sober and Temperate, how Chaſte, how ſeverely Juſt, how Meek and Peaceable, how Humble, how Patient and Submiſſive to the Will of God, how Loving and Charitable, what Contemners of this World and Conſiders in God we are enabled to be by the Power of it.

Let us declare that we are not mere Profeſſours of Faith in Chriſt Jeſus, by doing Acts worthy of ſuch a Faith: That we are not barely Relyers on Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, by being Imitatours of it, *by being righteous as he was righteous:* That we do truly be-

believe the Chriſtian Doctrine, by chearfully complying with the Chriſtian Precepts. Hereby let us know that we do *indeed* know him, that we keep his Commandments 1 Joh. 2. 3

By our care thus to do ſhall our minds (as hath been ſhewn) be inlightned in all Neceſſary Truth. It was by their care to *Do* the Will of God, that the Primitive Chriſtians obtained the right *Knowledge* of it. And there is no ſuch Method for the acquiring of all uſeful knowledge as this is.

ποιοῦντες τὸ θέλημα τοῦ Θεοῦ τὸ θέλημα γινώσκομεν. Clem. Alexandrin. Stromat. Lib. 1. Pag. 288.

By this means ſhall we alſo be kept Conſtant in the True Profeſſion of the Faith. The *Obedient* is the only Chriſtian that is out of danger even of a Total Apoſtacy; nor can there be any ſure hold of any one that is not Obedient. He whoſe Great Deſign it is to keep the Commandments of God and his Son Jeſus, is the onely Solid, Stable and Settled man. Our Saviour hath likened him unto a *Wiſe man which built his houſe upon a Rock*, which,

which, notwithſtanding that the rain deſcended, and floods came, and the winds blew and all beat upon it, fell
Mat. 7. 24. not, *becauſe it was founded upon a Rock.* And on the contrary he hath compared thoſe that *hear*, but *do not*
Verſ. 26. his ſayings, to a *Fooliſh man, which built his houſe upon the Sands*; which, when aſſaulted by a Tempeſt, fell; *and great was the fall of it.* 'Tis no ſtrange thing to ſee a very highly *Profeſſing*, if he be not as conſciencioufly *Living* a Chriſtian, toſſed up and down like a wave of the Sea, and carried away with every Wind of Doctrine: but ſo will not the *Obedient* Perſon be. He may ('tis confeſſed) alter his opinion in the *leſs weighty* and *more obſcurely delivered* Points, but thoſe which belong to the main *body* and *ſubſtance* of Chriſtianity, and are *plainly* revealed, as all ſuch are, he will inſeparably adhere to.

By this means will our Knowledge be ſanctified and made uſeful, but without the care of Obedience it will be utterly unprofitable, nay of very hurtful and miſchievous Conſequence.

What-

Whatſoever Chriſtian knowledge is not impregnated with anſwerable Goodneſs, but is unaccompanied with Chriſtian Practice, is not onely an *inſipid* and *jejune*, but alſo a *flatulent* thing, that in ſtead of *nouriſhing* is apt to ſwell and extremely *puff up* the Souls of men; I mean, to make them proud and highly opinionated of their own worth, cenſorious and contemners of other People, and of a conceited and pragmatical, a contentious and unpeaceable behaviour. And there is no man but may obſerve too too many of our great pretenders to Chriſtianity unhappily Exemplifying and demonſtrating by their practices this ſad truth.

By this means, ſhall we convince Gain-ſayers more than by any Arguments: But they are never like to be perſwaded that our *Judgements* are *Orthodox*, while they perceive our *Converſations* to be *Heretical*. Wicked men are an infinite diſcredit to any party they ſide with, and do it mighty diſſervice. I wiſh we of the Church

Church of *England* did not know this by very woful Experience. And on the other hand, a good life cannot but be of exceeding great force to draw Diſſenters to the embracing of our Religion. We ſee that mere Pretences to great Sanctity do ſtrangely make Proſelytes to ſeveral Forms, that have nothing beſides to ſet them off and commend them. And as for obſtinate Perſons who are peremptorily reſolved that they will by no means be prevailed with to come over to us, they will however be greatly diſabled from reproaching our Religion, when they are convinc'd that it hath excellent effects on the Profeſſours of it: Or at leaſt, neither their Reproaches, nor any Attempts whatſoever againſt it, could then ever have ſucceſs, or be able to do any thing to its conſiderable prejudice. Nor would that idle and ſenſleſs talk, whereby ſome Hot-headed people endeavour to prove us an *Anti-Chriſtian Church*, be by many, if by any liſtened to, could they diſcern among us more *Chriſtian Lives*: could they be once ſatisfied that we eſteem it

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our Principal intereſt and concernment to make our ſelves and others really and *Subſtantially* good. *So is the Will of God* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *that with well-doing ye may put to Silence the Ignorance of fooliſh men.* 1 Pet. 2. 15

By this means ſhall we paſs cheerfully through this ſad world; and in the middeſt of our thoughts within us will ſolid comforts delight our Souls. Little do thoſe think what Happineſs they deprive themſelves of even in *this* life, that place their Religion in any thing more than an Univerſal reſpect to their Saviour's Precepts. There is no true Chriſtian that needs to be told, That the more careful he is to *obey God*, the more ſweetly he enjoys himſelf: Nor, That a Vertuous and Holy Life doth ſeveral ways bring in a conſtant Revenue of Peace and Pleaſure; even ſuch as no Earthly thing can afford any that deſerves to be nam'd on the ſame day with it. Every good man feels that Chriſt's yoke is not leſs *Pleaſant* than it is *Eaſie*, nor his Burthen more *Light* than it is *Delightful:*

ful: And that *all his ways* are, upon many accounts, *ways of Pleaſantneſs*, and *all his Paths Peace.* So that were there no other Reward to be hoped for but what dayly attends them, it would be moſt unqueſtionably our Intereſt to walk in them, and to forſake all other for them: And there is no one of Chriſt's Diſciples that by *Experience* underſtands what his Bleſſed Maſter's injunctions are, that would be content to be eaſed, though he might, of them: Or that would accept of a *Quietus eſt* from performing the Duties required by him, though he ſhould have it offered him, even with the *Broad Seal* of Heaven (which is impoſſible to be ſuppoſed) affixed to it.

But, laſtly, by this means ſhall we obtain, when we depart hence, *the End of our Faith, even the Salvation of our Souls*, and arrive at a moſt Happy and Glorious Immortality. By the purſuance of real and Univerſal Righteouſneſs ſhall we certainly obtain the *Crown of Righteouſneſs*,

neſs, which our righteous Redeemer hath purchaſed for us, and *God the Righteous Judge* will give unto us. An *exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory* we ſhall aſſuredly reap, if we faint not and be not weary of Well-doing. 2 Tim. 4.

Glory, Honour and Peace is the undoubted portion of every Soul that worketh good. And *Bleſſed are they that do his Commandments, for they have right to the Tree of Life, and ſhall enter through the Gates into the City.* Rom. 2. 10 Rev. 22. 14

But if, on the Contrary, we fooliſhly ſatisfie our ſelves with an *ineffectual* Faith in Chriſt, a *notional* knowledge and *empty* Profeſſion of his Religion, or a meerly *external* and *Partial* Righteouſneſs; theſe will be ſo far from intitling us to the *exceeding great and precious Promiſes* of the Goſpel, that they (at leaſt the three former) will much heighten our miſery in the world to come, and exceſſively aggravate our Condemnation.

Let us hear the Conclusion of the whole matter; Fear God, and keep his Commandments (from a Principle of Love to him and them;) *for this is the whole of* (the Christian) *Man.*

The End.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM

Errata.

PAge 17. *line* 8. *for* practical *read* partial. *p.* 51. *l.* 3. *r.* world. *p.* 82. *l.* 7. *r.* poverty. *p.* 87. *l.* 1. *r.* for sin. and *l.* 9. *r.* Jealousie. *p.* 95. *l.* 12. *r.* of sin. *p.* 115. *l.* 18. *r.* farther add. *p.* 155. *l.* 27. *r* look. *p.* 174. *l.* 7. *blot out* too. *p.* 190. *l.* 23. *r.* Christians. *p.* 211. *last line*, *for* the *r.* their. *p.* 224. *l.* 17. *for* in *r.* on. *p.* 280. *l.* 17. *r.* need not. *p.* 294. *l.* 13. *r.* filled. *p.* 300. *l.* 8. *r.* it is. *In* ὑπάρκον *p.* 106. and *in* ψυχῆς *p.* 112. and *in* χάλαζα *p.* 187. *for* κ *should be* χ.

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